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THE PROBLEM OF THE TWO PROLOGUES TO CHAUCER'S LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN

BY

JOHN C. FRENCH

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THE PROBLEM OF THE TWO PROLOGUES TO CHAUCER'S LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN.

A. THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL.

I. Introduction.

The *Prologue* to Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* has come down to us in two distinct versions. That these versions go back to distinct originals, and not to a common original greatly distorted in the course of transmission, is shown by large variations both in subject matter and form. That they are very closely related to each other is no less evident from the fact that a large number of lines, more than half of the shorter version, are exactly identical in both. Moreover, the lines which are peculiar to one version or to the other and those which are common to both, bear alike the unmistakable stamp of Chaucerian authorship. It may at once be taken for granted, therefore,—for the conclusion is irresistible,—that one of these versions is a revised or rewritten form of the other, and that the revision was made by the poet himself.

We have in these two versions, so far as Chaucer texts are concerned, a unique possession. Chaucer has been edited and re-edited and even translated into English by his critics, but in no other poem than the *Legend* has his own criticism of himself in any way come down to us. The importance of this possession is enhanced by the significant position which the *Prologue* occupies among his works. Although the date of the poem cannot be fixed with exactness, we are certain beyond conjecture that it stands near the middle of his career. In point of literary form it looks both backward and forward, for the dream, the glorification of spring, and the allegory, appear at their best and for the last time as literary conventions in the *Prologue*, and a collection of tales bound together in a common scheme and introduced by a prologue occurs

for the first time in the *Legend of Good Women*, the immediate precursor in art, and probably in time also, of the more ambitious *Canterbury Tales*.

Considered apart from other works of Chaucer, the *Prologue* is still a significant poem. There is every reason to believe that when Chaucer planned the *Legend*, he meant to make it a monumental work. In that spirit the *Prologue*, necessarily the most vital and original part of the poem, was written. From Boccaccio he borrowed possibly the plan of a prologue and tales, and nothing more; from the 'Flower and Leaf' romancers, to whom he gracefully alludes, no more than a few of their conventions. He passed on to his imitators more of an impulse than he received from any of them. A notable result of this is the anonymous[1] poem, *The Flower and the Leaf*, apparently inspired by Chaucer's poem and obviously an imitation of it. Clanvowe, in *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*,[2] owes much to the *Prologue*, and the anonymous author of the *Court of Love*[3] betrays its influence in several lines. As an important testimony to that influence in modern times, may be instanced Tennyson's *Dream of Fair Women*.

Since there is no external evidence to show when or why the revision was made, or even which version is the original and which the revision, the possession of the two forms, however significant the poem in itself, has thus far little meaning to us. They are valuable only for what each adds to the common store of Chaucerian verse. The problem of the closer relation of the two *Prologues* must be settled, if at all, by an appeal to internal evidence. In regard to this, as Professor Kittredge calls it,[4] "very difficult question," scholars are hopelessly at variance. Since 1871, when the publication by the Chaucer Society of Ms. Cambridge Gg. 4, 27 in the six-text edition made the shorter version easily accessible in print, the question of the relation of the two versions has been argued from various points of view. Conjectures have been

[1] I do not regard as tenable Professor Skeat's attribution (*Athenæum*, March 14, 1903) of this poem to Margaret Neville, sister of the Earl of Warwick.

[2] *Oxford Chaucer*, VII, 347; cf. ll. 56–80.

[3] Cf. W. A. Neilson, "The Origins and Sources of the *Court of Love*," *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, VI, 229; and J. T. T. Brown, "The Authorship of *The Kingis Quair*, a New Criticism." New York, Macmillan & Co.; 1896.

[4] *Modern Philology*, I, 1, n. 1.

advanced as to the date and occasion of the revision, and from the same basis of fact different scholars have arrived at precisely opposite conclusions. In these investigations selections from both texts have been minutely compared; but no one so far as I know has as yet undertaken a thorough line by line comparison of the whole of the two versions.

Obviously, such a comparison must be the last resort in determining the matter. If a theory based upon the poet's circumstances, the chronology of his works, or his age does not bear the test of a critical examination of all the changes which appear in the texts, the theory is strongly discredited. If, on the other hand, a satisfactory motive for revising the poem is confirmed by the discovery of a great number of such improvements as we might expect a mature poet to make in a revision, the evidence is cumulative in favor of the better version as the later.

It has been my purpose, accordingly, to weigh the various conjectures why Chaucer revised the poem, and to reach a conclusion, based upon their more important variations, as to the relation of the two versions to each other. This conclusion I have endeavored to test fully by an exhaustive comparison of the two texts in detail. For the sake of convenience the longer and more widely distributed form is designated throughout as F,—Ms. Fairfax 16 being the basis of the text,—and the other version, as G, after the Cambridge manuscript which contains it.

II. The History of the Problem.

The existence of the Cambridge version of the *Prologue*, which was discovered in 1864 in Ms. Gg. 4, 27 of the Cambridge University Library by Mr. Henry Bradshaw, was first made generally known by Dr. Furnivall. In the summer of 1871 in a brief note in *The Athenæum*,[1] he announced Mr. Bradshaw's discovery, and a few months later published in the same periodical[2] a discussion of the two forms. "That G. is the earlier version," he says, "can hardly be doubted," and he continues to compare the two forms,

[1] June 17, p. 754.

[2] October 21, p. 528.

pointing out what he regards as improvements in the commonly accepted version. In *Trial Forewords*,[1] published in the same year, he again touched upon the variations between the two versions, taking it for granted that the priority of the newly found text was unquestioned.

M. Beeh, in his "Quellen und Plan der 'Legende of Goode Women' und ihr Verhaeltnis zur 'Confessio Amantis,'"[2] adverted incidentally to the problem of the two prologues as follows: "Dass Gg. 4, 27 die frühere fassung ist, wie Furnivall im *Athenæum* '71, October s. 528 ff. meint, ist auch meine ansicht. Fairfax MS. 16 trägt den charakter einer endgiltigen fassung, jenes hingegen den einer vorläufigen." He argues further that the detailed enumeration of available books and stories in G (ll. 267-312) has been wisely compressed into lines 556-558 of F, and that the idea of the *Prologue* has so developed in revision that Alcestis, who in G is praised for herself only, becomes in F a means to an end, namely, the celebration of the queen of England.

In a dissertation entitled, *Das Verhaeltnis der Handschriften von Chaucer's Legend of Good Women*, Siegfried Kunz arrived at a similar conclusion after a brief comparison of G and F. He found F more consistent, fuller, and livelier than G, and the variations between the two versions such as could only be accounted for by the theory that F is a revised form. An opinion that he had earlier held, namely, that the poem was first written independently and that later, upon the command of the queen, it was turned to account by Chaucer as a prologue, Kunz relinquished as untenable.

Professor W. W. Skeat, in his edition of *The Legend of Good Women*,[3] treated the question in further detail but also not exhaustively. He concluded from a general comparison of the texts that G, which he therefore terms A, is undoubtedly the earlier, adding: "I have no doubt that a close and elaborate investigation would establish the order incontrovertibly; but it is needless to undertake it here; for we should at the close of it, only prove that which, for practical purposes, is already sufficiently clear."

[1] P. 104 f.

[2] *Anglia*, v, 313–382.

[3] Clarendon Press, 1889.

When he came several years later to incorporate his earlier edition of the *Legend* into the *Oxford Chaucer*,[1] Professor Skeat found no reason to change his opinion. He reiterated his former judgment, concluding,[2] "I am not aware that any one has ever doubted this result."

Doubt was presently expressed with vigor, however, by ten Brink in a paper entitled, "Zur Chronologie von Chaucer's Schriften," which was published in *Englische Studien*[3] after his untimely death. The second part of this paper was devoted to the problem of the two *Prologues*, and to the date of the translation of Pope Innocent's tractate, *De Contemptu Mundi*. In it ten Brink, remarking that he had never seen any adequate ground for the commonly received opinion, undertook to prove by an entirely new course of reasoning that G is a revised form. He argued (1) that since allusions to the poet's old age which are found in G are consistently wanting in F, therefore G must have been written when Chaucer was an older man and is consequently the later version; (2) that the list of authorities named by the god of Love in G (ll. 267-312) contains books with which Chaucer does not seem to have been acquainted when he wrote the first version; (3) that the ballad, which in G (ll. 203-223) has the refrain *Alceste is here*, existed, previous to its use in the *Prologue*, as an independent poem, and that it appears in the form in which it was first written in F (ll. 249-269) where the refrain is *My lady cometh*, F being therefore the earlier version; (4) that the plan of the *Legend* as originally conceived appears more clearly in F than in G. Since this plan was never carried out the poem which does not present it fully may be assumed to be later. When all these arguments are admitted, it is a short step to a new date for the translation of Pope Innocent's work, which, inasmuch as it is mentioned in G and not in F, may be supposed to have been made between the first copy and the revision.

The date of the G version, from its association with the *Man of Law's* headlink, ten Brink regards as hardly earlier than 1393,

[1] Clarendon Press, 1895.

[2] Vol. III, p. xxi.

[3] Vol. XVII (1892), pp. 1–23.

and the *Wreched Engendring of Mankinde*, on account of its religious character, he associates with the period of Chaucer's bereavement and financial distress, and dates 1387-1388. From the mention in the *Man of Law's* headlink[1] of various heroines as if they had been celebrated in Chaucer's *Seintes Legende of Cupyde*, though their stories are not found in the *Legend* as we have it, ten Brink concluded that the poet must have been planning, as he wrote the headlink, to complete the *Legend of Good Women*. Before writing any additional stories, he revised the *Prologue*, altering it to suit his changed relation to the court. When he had done this much, he tired of the project and gave it up, withholding the new version from circulation.

On the appearance of this article Dr. John Koch added to his *Chronology of Chaucer's Writings*, then (1892) in press for the Chaucer Society, an appendix in which he endeavored to refute ten Brink's arguments one by one. To the conclusion based on allusions to old age, he replied by discrediting the manuscript authority for one passage (G 315) and the seriousness of another (G 258-263), doubting the chronological significance of such changes in any case. The omission in F of the list of books he attributed to the inappropriateness of some of them, and to the poet's desire to obey the injunction of the god of Love to be brief. He found in the inconsistency of G, in that the poet pretends to be ignorant of the name of Alcestis when he has thrice heard it in the ballad, a convincing proof that F is a revision, and turned ten Brink's argument on the plan of the *Legend* directly about to make it prove the opposite. It seemed to him very strange that if Chaucer added the *Wreched Engendring of Mankinde* to the list of his works because it had been written since the first version, he did not also mention the tales of Griseldis and Constance, which all admit were probably written before 1393.

Upon such considerations as these and others already advanced by Skeat, Dr. Koch saw the arguments of ten Brink crumble to pieces and was "astonished to find so much ingenuity applied to so futile an attempt." In a footnote (p. 81) to Koch's appendix,

[1] *Canterbury Tales*, B 60 ff.

Furnivall tersely expressed his view of ten Brink's theory by the ejaculation, "Impossible surely!"

In Germany, however, the theory of the priority of F was received with more favor. Dr. E. Koeppel, who had previously held to the commonly accepted view, promptly accepted it[1] and declared that he regarded the question as settled for all time. This judgment he reiterated in a review of Koch's *Chronology*[2] denying that any of the books named by the god of Love are inappropriate or that his warning had any bearing on the length of the *Prologue* itself, and asserting that the inconsistencies of G are merely evidences of the haste of the reworking. Continuing, Koeppel advanced the rather startling opinion that the revision of the *Prologue* was undertaken with a view to making the *Legend*, or part of it, serve as one of the *Canterbury Tales* to be told by Chaucer himself. Hence the omission in G of passages lyrical in tone and inappropriate in a narrative poem. When Chaucer had completed the revision, Koeppel suggests, he was so disappointed with the result that he abandoned the idea of using it, and laid the manuscript away among papers not intended for circulation.

In 1896, Max Kaluza, reviewing[3] Skeat's treatment of the problem in his introduction to the *Legend* in the *Oxford Chaucer*,[4] expressed a belief in ten Brink's theory which had not been at all shaken by Koch's arguments against it. He attempted no discussion of the question, however, and was content with challenging the English editor to answer ten Brink's arguments in detail.

The conclusions of ten Brink as to the chronology of the *Prologues* elicited further approval in America from Frank Jewett Mather, Jr. In a foot-note to his edition of selections from the *Canterbury Tales*,[5] published in 1899, Dr. Mather not only accepted the order of the versions as definitely fixed, but even turned ten Brink's conjecture as to the date of F into unhesitating certainty, declaring G to be "a revised version made after the

[1] In *Englische Studien*, XVII, 196.

[2] *Literaturblatt für germanische und romanische Philologie*, 1893, February, col. 51.

[3] In *Englische Studien*, XXII, 271. [4] Vol. III, p. xxi.

[5] *The Prologue, The Knight's Tale, and The Nun's Priest's Tale*, Cambridge, 1899, p. xxiii, n.

queen's death in 1394, with the omission and alteration of matter personal to her."

The challenge of Kaluza, which remained unanswered by Skeat, was taken up in 1900 by a French scholar, Prof. Emile Legouis, in a paper entitled, "Quel fut le premier composé par Chaucer des deux prologues de la Légende des Femmes Exemplaires?"[1] In this paper Legouis protested against ten Brink's "chronological preoccupation," and adopting a method already slightly used by Skeat endeavored to show (1) that an examination of the plan of the *Prologue* discloses decided improvements in F, and (2) that the variant readings are so much better in F as to justify fully the conclusion that G is the earlier form. Combating ten Brink's arguments one by one he urged that the mention of Chaucer's old age is significant only when a long interval between the two *Prologues* is assumed, an assumption opposed to reason, and that their absence from F is better explained on the ground that Chaucer omitted as too personal the passages containing them. In the probability that the ballad originally had the refrain *My lady cometh*, Legouis found no evidence as to the order of the *Prologues*, and in the greater definiteness of F as to the plan of the *Legend*, a positive argument for his own view. The omission of the list of books in Love's reproof, he regarded as a great gain, the reproof being in his opinion pedantic and verbose. With due caution to avoid the over-certainty which he blames in ten Brink, Legouis suggests that the obvious dedication to the queen in F may be due to a sudden change in Chaucer's relation to the court—occasioned perhaps by the grant of permission to exercise his office by deputy—which made it possible for him to dedicate the work to the queen.

In a review of Legouis' argument for *Englische Studien*,[2] Koch hailed it as an independent confirmation of his own view, for Legouis did not see the appendix to *Chronology* until his own investigations were complete. It was now Koch's turn to declare the relation of the two *Prologues* settled for all time.

Those who had previously agreed with ten Brink received

[1] *Revue de l'Enseignment des Langues Vivants*, Avril, 1900, p. 58.
[2] Vol. xxx, p. 456.

Legouis's article with less favor, and were not inclined to change their views. Koeppel, reviewing a Chaucer monograph,[1] seized an opportunity to say that he still held firmly to the priority of F and to his theory that the revision was designed to serve as a Canterbury Tale.

Legouis' article was reviewed for *Anglia, Beiblatt*,[2] by Gustav Binz, who refused to be convinced that G is an original version. He did not find it possible, however, in view of the glaring inconsistencies of G, to regard it as a thorough-going revision. In order to save the credit of the poet, he assumed that G represents a revision which was never completed, and which might therefore very naturally be inconsistent with itself. With Legouis's rather sweeping esthetic judgment in favor of F, Binz was disposed to disagree, regarding many of the so-called improvements as extremely doubtful. He held the suggestion that the ballad might have been twice changed, the second time back to its original form, and that the old age passages were omitted as too personal, to be equally insufficient. Naturally he could not accept the conjecture of Legouis that the motive for the revision was Chaucer's desire to praise the queen, but held rather, with ten Brink, that Chaucer's coolness toward the court in his later years inspired if not the revision itself at least the changes which were made in the course of it.

Evidence of a somewhat different character was next brought to bear upon the problem by J. B. Bilderbeck. This evidence, which was presented in a dissertation[3] published in 1902, consisted chiefly of a detailed examination of the manuscripts. After collating the manuscripts, Mr. Bilderbeck proceeded to examine the two versions of the *Prologue* more narrowly, classifying the minor variations as improvements in structure or style. The results of these investigations convinced him that Cambridge Ms. Gg. 4, 27 presents a first draft of the separate legends up to and including that of Ariadne, and that the variations which appear in other Mss. are in large measure due to a revision made by the poet himself. The presumption thus established in favor of the priority of the G ver-

[1] *Englische Studien*, xxx, 467. [2] Vol. xi, p. 231–237.

[3] Bilderbeck, *Chaucer's Legend of Good Women*, London (Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld.), 1902.

sion of the *Prologue*, which is found only in Ms. Gg. 4, 27, Mr. Bilderbeck found to be fully confirmed by his comparison of the two versions. By means of a bolder interpretation of the allegorical allusions than has heretofore been attempted, he concluded further that the writing of the *Legend* was undertaken by the command of Queen Anne in 1385, and that the story of one heroine was added to it each year. The fact that evidences of revision extend over six of the stories, together with various other considerations, serves to fix the date of the F version as 1390.

In a recently published[1] study entitled, "The Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women* as related to the French *Marguerite* Poems and the *Filostrato*," Mr. John L. Lowes follows ten Brink in discrediting the earlier view as to the priority of G, and departs even more widely from traditional opinion. He rejects altogether the assumption, first made by ten Brink[2] himself and carried still further by Bilderbeck, that F, at least, is an elaborate compliment to Queen Anne, who is allegorically represented by Alcestis and the daisy. He shows (1) that the French *Marguerite* poems belong in general to a period just previous to the commonly accepted date of the *Legend;* (2) that certain passages peculiar to F, usually interpreted as allegory, depend more or less directly upon these poems and the *Filostrato;* (3) that F 1-196 is in many respects parallel in structure to Deschamps' *Lay de Franchise*, and that F from 197 to the end is similarly parallel to Froissart's *Paradys d'Amours*. He concludes that the apparently allegorical allusions in F are merely borrowings from French and Italian sources, and that G is a revision made when the poet's recollection of these sources had been dulled by time.

The order of the two *Prologues*, therefore, though at least twice "settled for all time" is still one of the most unsettled of Chaucer problems. That it can ever be settled to the absolute conviction of every critic, without the aid of entirely new external evidence, is perhaps too much to hope for. The effort in this paper will be to present a conclusion based upon a more elaborate investigation of the internal evidence than has heretofore been attempted.

[1] *Publications of the Mod. Lang. Asso. of America*, Vol. XIX, p. 593.

[2] *Chaucer Studien*, p. 147.

III. Chaucer's Motive for Revising the Prologue.

Chaucer was not a man of wealth and leisure. Most of his literary work seems to have been done in the intervals of a busy administrative life, and to have been inspired and carried on by an enthusiasm that overcame difficulties and led him constantly to abandon one poem unfinished in order to attempt another. It was not his habit to dwell long on any one piece of work or to revise a poem already written. His revision of the *Prologue* in question represents, as has been said above, apparently an exceptional and unique experience.

Instances of the working over of old material are not wanting in Chaucer, but the reworking was always for the sake of making the older poetry serve a new purpose. The two *Prologues*, however, stand in precisely the same relation to the rest of the *Legend*. There is no parallel here to the use of earlier poems as Canterbury Tales, or to the working in of early stanzas in the course of more mature work. For Chaucer's painstaking revision of a poem, which when revised should have the same general form and the same relation to his other poems, some special motive must have existed.

What this motive was has been variously conjectured. Furnivall,[1] though he noticed the lack of clear allusions to the queen in G, drew no conclusions from the fact and was satisfied with observing that the variations show improvement in F. He believed, apparently, that Chaucer revised the *Prologue* merely to make it better. ten Brink,[2] the first to make use of the allegorical allusions to the queen as a means of dating the poem, concluded that F, the only version then known to him, was designed as an expression of gratitude to the queen for influence exerted by her to secure him permission to exercise his office of comptroller by deputy. The date of F was thus fixed as 1385.

In his edition of the *Legend* published in 1889, Skeat accepted this date. He accounted for the existence of the two versions by

[1] *Athenæum*, Oct. 21, 1871, p. 528. [2] *Chaucer Studien*, I, 149.

supposing that when Chaucer had finished G he was not satisfied with it. The expression of gratitude which he had intended to convey did not come out with sufficient clearness. "So," says Skeat, "he at once set about to amend and alter it; the first draft, of which he had no reason to be ashamed, being at the same time preserved."

A few years later ten Brink[1] first expressed in print his belief in the priority of F. The occasion for the revision he assumed to be Chaucer's supposed intention about 1393 to take up the unfinished *Legend* and complete it. The real motive for his beginning this work by recasting the *Prologue* was his changed relation to the court. He had lost both his offices, and the royal favor which he had acknowledged in the first version was a thing of the past. Accordingly he changed the *Prologue* into a conventional poem, which should serve to introduce the *Legend* without conveying any play upon his earlier favorable relation to the queen. To account for the appearance of this revised version in only one manuscript, ten Brink was forced to make still another assumption, namely, that Chaucer gave up the project of completing the *Legend* before he had really begun it, and on that account withheld the later form from circulation.

The most novel conjecture as to Chaucer's motive for revising the *Prologue* is that of Koeppel, who, having accepted ten Brink's judgment in regard to the order of the two versions, proposed a theory of his own to account for it. He assumed,[2] as has been said above, that Chaucer intended at one time to use the *Legend of Good Women* as one of the *Canterbury Tales* to be told by himself. He found the *Prologue* as it appears in F, on account of its lyrical tone, its personal allusions, and its obvious allegory, ill adapted to this purpose and accordingly revised it. When the work was done he was still dissatisfied with the poem, and finally gave over his intention of using it as one of the *Canterbury Tales*. Hence the wider distribution of F.

Both Koch and Legouis reached independently a conclusion

[1] *Englische Studien*, I, 13.

[2] *Literaturblatt f. ger. u. rom. Phil.*, 1893, February, Col. 52.

quite the opposite of that of ten Brink, and differing in one essential respect from that of Skeat. They proposed to date G shortly before February 17, 1385,—the date of the grant of permission to Chaucer to employ a deputy,—and F shortly after that time. This theory involved the assumption, already made by ten Brink, that the queen had something to do with the grant, and that the F version was intended as an expression of the poet's gratitude. The absence of clear allusions to the queen in G was explained by the lack of an occasion for them.

Although Lowes does not assign any specific motive for the revision, he regards it as having resulted in a more compact and consistent poem; and as ten Brink's theory is not available, we may assume that he believes Chaucer to have revised F to make it a better poem.[1]

Bilderbeck, though quite certain that F is a better version, looks elsewhere for the motive of the revision and finds it chiefly in a changed relation to King Richard. He says, "In 1390 in order to pay a high compliment to a king whose administration was winning golden opinions, and to a queen who had shown him signal marks of favour, he revised both the Prologue and the legends that he had already written."[2] But Bilderbeck had already asserted positively[3] that in G, as well as in F, Alcestis stands for Queen Anne. His view, therefore, coincides in the main with that of Skeat with which for our purpose it may be associated.

There are thus open to us at least four possible views. We may believe that Chaucer revised the G *Prologue* to make a better poem of it, and that additions to it are merely incidental to that main purpose, or *vice versa*, that he revised F for a similar reason; that he revised G because as an expression of gratitude to the queen it was inadequate and unsuccessful; that he revised F to get allusions to the queen out of it, either on account of his changed relations to the court, or on account of his desire to make a Canterbury Tale of the *Legend*; or finally, that he revised G to

[1] Cf. Lowes, p. 665.
[2] Bilderbeck, p. 109.
[3] Ibid. p. 84.

get allusions to the queen into a poem which did not before contain them.

The first of these need not detain us long. Many minor variations between G and F are certainly improvements in F; but the most important changes were additions and omissions, which one does not need to study very long in order to become convinced that there was some special motive behind them. The faults of G, and they are not numerous, could have been remedied without the addition of 134 new lines. On the other hand the revision of F in the interest of better literary craftsmanship would surely not require the omission of so many good lines. The admission of Lowes, "that the B. version has the note of freshness, of spontaneity, of composition *con amore* to a greater degree than A.—that it is even the more delightful version of the two",[1] is a concession in favor of F not to be readily explained away by saying that that version was written *currente calamo*. It is perhaps worth while to observe further that those who regard G as a revision generally find it necessary to apologize for that version as hasty work. Thus Lowes[2] agrees with Binz[3] that after F l. 390 the revision "was manifestly most perfunctorily carried out," and Koeppel[4] speaks of "die in manchen Kleinigheiten bemerkbare Hast der Umarbeitung."

The assumption that Chaucer wrote the first version for the very purpose of expressing his gratitude to the king and the queen, and succeeded so badly that he had to rewrite the whole poem, does little credit to the mature powers of the poet. It seems strange, too, that he should, in that case, regard the unsatisfactory first draft as too good to throw away. The two versions are so different in spirit that it is very hard to believe in any hypothesis that does not involve some change of purpose.

That this change of purpose was such that it resulted in an attempt to withdraw the dedication to the queen, and to remove all obvious allusions to her from the poem, is equally hard to believe.

[1] Lowes, p. 683, n. 7.
[2] Lowes, p. 681, n. 3, p. 678, n. 4 (end).
[3] *Anglia, Beiblatt*, XI, 233–4.
[4] *Literaturblatt f. ger. u. rom. Phil.* 1893, February, col. 51.

In the first place, as Koeppel has said,[1] it is very improbable that Chaucer ever interrupted the course of his work on the *Canterbury Tales* to turn back to an uncompleted poem of a different character. It is still more improbable that if he did so he thought it necessary to revise the *Prologue* before he wrote any new legends. The intrinsic value of the poem as a whole could not be affected by the lapse of time, and the F version,—granting for the moment that it was the original,—could serve as well in 1393 as at any other time. There is, therefore, no motive left but personal pique, of which we have no grounds for accusing Chaucer. The somewhat elaborate theory of ten Brink is attained by successive steps, each hypothesis being constructed to explain and support the preceding one, until he has got surprisingly far from the starting point of established fact.

The theory that Chaucer intended to use the *Legend* or part of it as a Canterbury Tale is equally unconvincing, and shows its weakness in that, like ten Brink's, it compels us to believe that Chaucer did not know his own mind. In support of his contention, Koeppel cites only two passages from the text. They are equally inconclusive. I cannot believe that G ll. 85–88,

> For myn entent is, or I fro you fare,
> The naked text in English to declare
> Of many a story, or elles of many a geste,
> As autors seyn; leveth him if yow leste!

is any better adapted to narration by a Canterbury pilgrim than the lines which correspond to it in F.

97–102 But wherefor that I spak, to give credence
To olde stories, and doon hem reverence,
And that men mosten more thing beleve
Then men may seen at eye or elles preve?
That shal I *seyn*, whan that I see my tyme;
I may not al at ones *speke* in ryme.

The allusion to the ladies attending Alcestis, in the words,

> Have hem now in thy Legend alle in minde,

which appears in F (l. 557) and is wanting in G, is merely a

[1] *Literaturblatt f. ger. u. rom. Phil.* 1893, February, col. 52.

statement of what is equally implied in both versions, namely, that the story of Alcestis is to be the climax of a series of stories. We read entirely too much meaning into the word *alle*, if we suppose that its omission in G implies that Chaucer meant to leave himself free to omit a few heroines.

Two lines peculiar to G allude to the legends as written:

529 Let be the chaf and *wryte* wel of the corn.
532 For of Alceste shulde thy *wryting* be.

Moreover, the tone of the poem is bookish,—the allusion to the poets of the flower and leaf controversy is characteristic,—and G is even farther than F from the spirit and manner of a Canterbury prologue. It is impossible to believe that if Chaucer ever had tried to adapt F to such a purpose, he would not have succeeded far better than Dr. Koeppel would have us believe.

Only one assumption remains to be considered, namely, that the G-version is the earlier, and that F represents a revision undertaken to make it an occasional poem. This theory, which Legouis advances somewhat hesitatingly, at the close of an investigation in which he has proceeded on the principle that Chaucer could only have revised the *Prologue* to give it greater cohesion and clearness, accords better with the facts than any other that has been proposed. The facts are that the two versions differ most significantly, not in allusions to the poet's age, or in the mention of works by Chaucer or by his favorite authors, not primarily in literary merit, but in the relation of the two poems to the queen.

In order to make this clear we will proceed to examine the two *Prologues* with regard to their larger variations. A cursory reading of the two forms side by side suggests that G, which is shorter, is also simpler, and more conventional than F. In G, after an introduction in which he discusses his fondness for old books and for daisies, hinting that love and ancient lore are to be associated in the work which he is about to begin, the poet takes up in a more specific manner the preparation for the *Legend*. He describes under the pretty fiction of a dream, inspired by a May-day in the fields, the impulse that moved him to write and the plan of the work. The daisy is a type of Alcestis, and Alcestis, the model of

purity and fidelity among women. The whole is an appropriate prologue, and nothing else.

F, on the other hand, is more elaborate than G, more subjective, and in the poet's expression of his own feelings, much more fervent. If we compare with the introduction in G, lines 1–88, the corresponding lines in F, 1–103, we shall find that the most significant differences consist of additions in F.

Examples of such additions are:

F 50 That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe,
So glad am I whan that I have presence
Of hit, to doon al maner reverence,
. . . . . .
56 And I love hit, and ever y-lyke newe,
And ever shal, til that myn herte dye;
Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye,
Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve.
. . . . . .
82 . . . the flour,
Whom that I serve as I have wit or might.
She is the clernesse and the verray light,
That in this derke worlde me wynt and ledeth,
The herte inwith my sorowful brest you dredeth,
And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
The maistresse of my wit, and nothing I.
My word, my werk, is knit so in your bonde,
That, as an harpe obeyeth to the honde
And maketh hit soune after his fingeringe,
Right so mowe ye out of myn herte bringe
Swich vois, right as you list, to laughe or pleyne.
Be ye my gyde and lady sovereyne;
As to myn erthly god, to yow I calle,
Both in this werke and in my sorwes alle.

These passages indicate unmistakably that the daisy, which is in G merely a 'flower white and red,' here represents a lady whom Chaucer wishes to compliment as highly as possible, and whose patronage he invokes for his poem. Although these avowals are couched somewhat in the language of the conventional love-complaint, such expressions as "al maner reverence," "the herte you dredeth," "my lady sovereyne," "myn erthly god," lead us to suspect a different relation from that of a lover to his mistress, a suspicion which, as we shall see, is confirmed farther on.

The objection of Lowes[1] to this allegorical interpretation, on the ground that the passages just cited echo similar phrases in certain French poems and the *Filostrato*, I do not regard as at all conclusive. The Marguerite poems in question, as Lowes admits, are all allegorical. The invocation of the *Filostrato*, also, is addressed to a real person. This Chaucer must have taken for granted in both cases, if, indeed, he did not know it perfectly well. Now it is beside the point to argue, as Lowes does,[2] that Alcestis is a real person in any parallel sense; for she is no more real to Chaucer than the heroines of love who accompany her. Nothing seems to me more natural than that if Chaucer had determined to make an occasional poem of the *G-Prologue*, directing its allegorical meaning upon a living person, such phrases, already happily used for a similar purpose, should at once come into his mind. It seems quite unnatural that, if neither *Prologue* is allegorical, he should have carefully omitted such phrases merely because his recollection of the originals was dulled. Chaucer borrowed freely from other poets; but he did not borrow blindly, and his method in other cases justifies our belief that in this instance he made use of these lines, especially those from the *Filostrato*, because they specifically suited his purpose.

It is to be remembered, too, that Chaucer had a tradition of his own, which, aside from the influence of other poems, led in the direction of allegorical compliment. No one has yet ventured to deny that the *Duchesse* and the *Parlement* are allegorical, and that the latter is a celebration of Queen Anne.

The only other difference of importance up to this point is the omission in F of the announcement (G 85–88) of the author's intention to tell in English stories which he has gathered from old authors. This revelation he postpones in F with,

> "That shal I seyn whan that I see my tyme."

This difference concerns us now only as it indicates more clearly the single purpose of G. Verses 85–88 in G are a fitting climax

[1] Lowes, p. 669 ff. The relation of the passages to their sources will be considered later.

[2] Lowes, p. 673.

to the introduction. The lack of coherence between 88 and 89 Chaucer could easily have remedied without rewriting the whole, and G thus amended would be so far a perfectly satisfactory prologue as such. As an expression of devotion to a lady of high rank, it would stand in need of important changes. If we suppose the introduction of the avowal in F 83–96 to be one of these changes, the omission of G 85–88 becomes desirable.

Passing on from the introduction we find, besides various minor changes, many of them in the direction of greater devoutness on the part of the poet, two considerable additions in F. In F 152–170 the poet dwells much more fully on the mating of the birds, and in F 171–187 he introduces a new description of the delightfulness of the flowery meadow. Neither of these seems necessary to add coherence or clearness to G, but both are in keeping with the more elaborate and subjective character of F. The allusion to "... Daunger for a tyme a lord," and "Pitee" that made "Mercy passen right," may with no great stretch of the imagination be regarded as an allegorical reminiscence of the experience of one dependent on the bounty of a royal patron.[1]

The second addition is a glorification of the daisy, which echoes the avowal in F 83–96, and suggests palpably the same allegory. Note particularly lines 184–187:

> "The dayesye or elles the 'ye of day,'
> The emperice and flour of floures alle.
> I pray to god that faire mot she falle,
> And alle that loven floures, for hir sake!"

The next considerable variation between G and F is in the ballad. In G the ballad is sung "carolwyse" by the attendants of the queen with the refrain,

> "Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne;"

and in F the ballad is sung by the poet himself, "in preysing of this lady fre," with the refrain,

> "My lady cometh, that al this may disteyne."

[1] Cf. Skeat, *Oxford Chaucer*, III, p. xxiii; Bilderbeck, p. 102.

Obviously the poet is more directly responsible for the sentiments of a ballad when it is sung in his own person, and the ballad itself is more likely to have an allegorical significance when the subject of it is unidentified. If the queen is to be identified with Alcestis in G, there is no hint in the poem that this is the author's intention. In F, "My lady cometh" is instantly associated with ". . . my gyde and lady sovereyne," and the allegory is clear. As if to make it clearer still, the poet adds at the close of the ballad in F five lines (271-275) in which he repeats the thought of the ballad with the conclusion:

"So passeth al my lady sovereyne."

In place of the ballad as sung by the ladies in G, there appears in F a song which they sing (ll. 296-299):

. . . . . "Hele and honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
That berth our alder prys in figuringe!
Hir whyte coroun berth the witnessinge!"

in which a similar thought is expressed.

Another important difference between G and F lies in the tirade of the god of Love against the poet. The allusion to the poet's age and the long discussion of his books (G 258-312), are wholly wanting in F. Now neither of these passages is out of place in a conventional prologue. It is not unnatural that the god should accuse the poet of despising love because he could no longer feel its fire, and it is quite natural that after Chaucer's appreciative allusion to old books in the introduction, we should now hear more of them. In a prologue that is intended to serve as a compliment and a dedication, however, these passages are least essential. They can be dropped out without injury to the narrative, and they leave the prologue free to center more definitely about its heroine.

From this point on for nearly 200 lines the variations are very slight. Then we come in F 496 to the following couplet:

"And whan this book is maad, yive hit the quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham or at Shene."

This is as clear a dedication as we have any right to expect, clearer than any allusion found in the *Book of the Duchesse* or the

Parliament of Birds, both of which are admittedly occasional poems. We have already seen that F differs from G chiefly by the addition of passages expressing romantic devotion to a lady under the figure of the daisy. The tone of these passages has suggested the suspicion that they are aimed at a royal personage. This couplet settles the matter. It would be absurd for the poet to dedicate to the queen a poem in which some other "lady sovereyne" is lauded as his "erthly god," "emperice and flour of floures alle" surpassing all others in truth and beauty.

Prologue F, therefore, is an occasional poem designed as an elaborate compliment to the queen of England,[1] whose betrothal Chaucer has already celebrated in the *Parliament*. *Prologue G* is not. Either Chaucer revised F in order to get the allusions to the queen out of the poem, or he revised G in order to dedicate the work to her, and to make the *Prologue* an allegory in her honor. That in a moment of pique over his lack of favor at court, Chaucer rewrote F in order to undo his work, is a supposition that suits neither the spirit of the poet as it is elsewhere revealed to us, nor the chronology of his life and writings. Chaucer assuredly had too much good sense to attempt to withdraw a dedication already made and circulated, even if we can think him mean-spirited enough to wish to do so.

It is much easier to believe that after the first draft of the conventional prologue was finished, and had passed into the hands of a few of his friends, Chaucer determined for some reason to dedicate the work to the queen, and rewrote the *Prologue* accordingly. Whether his motive for doing so was gratitude for permission to exercise his office of Comptroller by deputy, it is vain for us to conjecture, for we do not know that the queen had anything to do with the matter.[2] Some other specific favor or some interest manifested by the queen in the work which he had undertaken is quite as likely to have furnished an occasion. Whatever the first motive, a reasonable and sufficient purpose in the revision is apparent, and that purpose creates a strong presumption in favor of F as the revised form.

[1] Cf. Bilderbeck, p. 100.

[2] Cf. Tatlock, *Mod. Philol.* I, 327–8.

IV. The Ballad.

So much has been made of the ballad in its relation to the two versions of the *Prologue* as to justify a separate treatment of that problem. The ballad itself is substantially the same in both *Prologues*, with the exception of a significant variation in the refrain. The variation is as follows:

G Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.
F *My lady cometh*, that al this may disteyne.

As the meaning of the ballad depends wholly upon its refrain, this variation is of considerable importance. In G the fair one who so far surpasses in beauty and fidelity all the good women of history, is the Greek Alcestis; in F she is the unidentified 'My lady.'

Equally important is a variation in the context which gives the ballad a different relation to the poem in each. In G the ballad is prefaced by the words (ll. 199–202):

And after that they wenten in compas,
Daunsinge aboute this flour an esy pas,
And songen, as it were in carol-wyse,
This balade, which that I shal yow devyse.

In F, instead of these lines appear the following (ll. 247–248):

And therfor *may I seyn*, as thinketh me,
This song, in preysing of this lady fre.

In these two variations alone, ten Brink[1] saw conclusive proof of the priority of F. For, he reasoned, the reproof of the god of Love in F, 537 ff.:

. . . . A ful gret negligence
Was hit to thee, that ilke tyme thou made
"Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses" in balade,
That thou forgete hir in thy song to sette,

can have no meaning unless, according to the god's interpretation of it, the refrain alludes to some one else than Alcestis. More-

[1] *Englische Studien*, XVII, 17.

over, since the god of Love is familiar with the ballad, although it was not addressed to him but merely communicated to the reader, he must know it in an original form independent of the *Legend*. From his reproof it is clear that he knows only the form which has the refrain, *My lady cometh*. Hence F contains the original ballad and is consequently beyond question the original prologue.

All this was to Koch[1] just as certain proof of the precise opposite, though his answer to it is less satisfactory than that of Legouis. Legouis[2] accuses ten Brink of forgetting the rights of fiction, and argues that whether the ballad was written before the *Prologue* or not, it is here conceived as improvised on the spot, and must be so accepted both by the reader and by the god of Love, who is presumed to be, like other gods, omniscient. This view seems to me to be thoroughly just. ten Brink has in fact strangely confused literal fact and poetic fiction, and his conclusion, so far as it depends upon the god of Love's acquaintance with Chaucer's verse, has a very unstable foundation.

The god does, indeed, elsewhere in the poem, allude to the *Romance of the Rose* and to *Troilus and Cressida*, and his queen names several more of Chaucer's works; yet we do not feel it necessary to conceive of either of them as having read a Chaucer manuscript. We must remember that Love is a god, and a dream-god at that, and not bound by the restrictions to which mortal readers of Chaucer are subject. The fact that the ballad is addressed to the reader and not to the god of Love is, therefore, unimportant. In G the poet uses a very simple convention in having a lyrical passage in a narrative poem sung by some of the actors. In F he abandons the convention and, with a word of explanation, boldly adopts the lyrical form himself. To the ordinary reader, and one might add, to the poet himself, no necessary incongruity is involved in the second method. One must be in a particular frame of mind before it occurs to one, on reading this poem, to ask whether the poet composed the three stanzas of the

[1] *Chronology of Chaucer's Writings*, p. 84.
[2] Legouis, p. 61.

ballad on the spot, and whether the god of Love overheard him, or read his heart.

Besides concurring with ten Brink in the conclusions just cited, Lowes[1] endeavors to give the ballad special significance by bringing it into relation with a ballad of Froissart[2] in the *Paradys d'Amours*. The first stanza of this ballad recites the virtues of various flowers, and concludes with the refrain (l. 1635),

Sus toutes flours j'aime la margherite,

and the remaining stanzas are a further glorification of the marguerite with the same refrain. Lowes argues that inasmuch as Chaucer had already adequately celebrated the daisy he could not follow Froissart closely, but was forced to substitute for the flowers the names of women, whom in a sense they typify.

The question of the source of the ballad, apart from its possible bearing on the order of the *Prologues*, does not now concern us, and need not be discussed at length. It should be said, however, that the only resemblance between the ballad of Chaucer and that of Froissart is a likeness in method, and that not remarkably close. The source already suggested by Skeat,[3] if we are to look for a specific source, is much more reasonable. This ballad, printed by Raynaud,[4] among works "*attributables a Deschamps*," we may reasonably suppose Chaucer to have known; though the fact that the citation of well-known characters, who are compared with one's sweetheart to her advantage, is a common convention,[5] makes it impossible to say that this poem served as his model. In any case nothing is proved as to the order of the ballads in date of composition. In G we have Chaucer's first use of the type for one purpose,—the celebration of a heroine of antiquity, who must be named in the refrain if it is to be understood,—and in F a second use of it for a different purpose, the celebration of a woman then living. In the second case his purpose coincides with that of the conventional type, and consequently the type is followed more closely.

[1] Lowes, p. 655 ff.

[2] *Oeuvres* (ed. Scheler), I, 49.

[3] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, 298.

[4] Deschamps, *Oeuvres Complètes*, X, p. xlix.

[5] Cf. *Balades* XLVII and LX in the same volume of Deschamps.

Whatever we may think as to the source of Chaucer's graceful praise of his "lady sovereyne" it is unnecessary to assume that these verses existed as an independent poem before they were used in the *Prologue*. Absalom[1] and Jonathan, who are named in the ballad, are not available for a Legend of Good Women; but the ballad does not pretend to be a table of contents. It occurs in the *Prologue*, in both versions, before the injunction to write the Legend has been mentioned, and is in no way limited in its range by the plan of the poem as a whole.

Indeed, the mention of Absalom and Jonathan is here especially appropriate, for of Absalom it is said,[2] "In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty"; and David in his lamentation over Jonathan said of him,[3] "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." From the superlative types of beauty and fidelity among men, the poet passes on to recount examples of heroic and ill-fated virtue among women, reaching his climax in the wifely devotion of Alcestis. In all this there is no reason for believing that the ballad was not composed specifically for use in the G version, and that it was so composed is the more natural assumption. It is, however, much more than a mere assumption, for a close scrutiny of the text of the ballad should convince any one that it was first written for the glorification of Alcestis. The line common to both versions (F 253, G 207),

Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun,

is clearly an allusion to the devotion of Alcestis in dying in her husband's stead. In F, regarded apart from its context as a typical love lyric, this line would be inexplicable. The ballad contains other expressions such as, "trouthe of love," "of love swich peyne" "your trouthe," which would be difficult if not meaningless in a poem addressed to an unidentified mistress. These facts seem to me to preclude the possibility that the ballad as it appears in F ever had an independent existence, and to render nugatory ten Brink's argument based on that assumption.

[1] Cf. allusions to his beauty in balades of Deschamps, especially I, 150; IV, 347.
[2] II Samuel XIV, 25. [3] II Samuel I, 26.

It is equally evident that the ballad was not originally written for the place which it occupies in F, whence it follows as a corollary that its relation to that version was in no way influenced by Froissart's ballad. In F the ballad is recited avowedly in order to give fitting praise to the beauty of the queen whom the god of Love leads with him. It is introduced by the lines (244–248):

> . . . . In this world, thogh that men wolde seke,
> Half hir beautee shulde men nat finde
> In creature that formed is by kinde.
> And *therfor* may I seyn, as thinketh me,
> This song, in preysing of this lady fre.

Yet the ballad is not devoted primarily to the praise of her beauty, though some allusion is made to it, but to her fidelity in love and her wifehood, qualities which could not be discerned at first sight. But neither the reader nor the dreamer has had any intimation that this lady is Alcestis. The ballad in F is therefore somewhat out of harmony with its context, and bears the appearance of a passage wrested from its former connection to serve a new purpose. Especially is this the case if, as Lowes urges,[1] no allegorical significance is to be admitted, and the reader may not assume that the daisy-crowned queen is the patroness already invoked under the figure of the daisy, and now indicated a little more clearly as queen and wife.

In G, on the other hand, the ballad is perfectly in place. We are plainly told in G 179 that,

> Hir name was Alceste the debonayre;

and Alcestis is named in the refrain by those who are supposed to know all her virtues. The ballad is in fact an Alcestis poem in both versions, having no connection *in se* with the Marguerite cult, and it is necessary to assume that it was first written in the version which frankly names Alcestis.

It is quite possible, of course, that the ballad as it appears in G first existed as an independent poem. One might even argue with some show of reason that the ballad thus independently composed represents the germ of the *Legend*. We know from his allusion

[1] Lowes, p. 670 f.

to her in Troilus (Bk. v, ll. 1527–1533) that Chaucer knew the story of Alcestis and was interested in it. Suppose that this interest led him to celebrate her, as the preëminent example of wifely devotion, in a ballad after the manner of Deschamps. The success of the ballad suggested a larger scheme, and he thought of telling in some detail the stories of the women whom he had merely named in the shorter poem. The new undertaking took the form of a succession of stories of heroic women with Alcestis, as before, the climax. The idea of representing the whole work as a penance imposed by the god of Love on account of his having written Troilus and the Romance of the Rose, gave the *Prologue*. The *Legend* is thus the ballad expanded. After the *Prologue* was written, and possibly a tale or two, it occurred to him for some reason to make Alcestis a type of the queen of England, and thus to dedicate the poem to her. Accordingly the *Prologue* was rewritten, and the ballad appeared in the revision in a more subjective form with a refrain suited to the new purpose. I do not say that this theory is convincing, or indeed that it is anything more than possible, yet it is after all as plausible as that upon which ten Brink has based so much of his argument for the priority of F.

Leaving the region of pure conjecture, we may notice that the variations between the two ballads are just such as we might expect in a change from the literal to the allegorical. If the verses are to serve as a compliment to the queen, they must not too literally praise Alcestis, and they must be in line with the preceding allegory. The indefiniteness of F and its subjective character are, therefore, ends to be gained by the revision. The evidence of the text is that both have been gained at the cost of some slight disturbance of a previously adopted plan, and the allusions to Alcestis make it impossible to assume the opposite process as an effort at improvement in structure.

If my reasoning in regard to the ballad has been correct, certain inferences appear to be inevitable. These are (1) that the incongruity involved in the allusion of the god of Love to the ballad in F is more fancied than real, and is in any case not to be explained by assuming the priority of F; (2) that the ballad in

F is not an imitation of Froissart's ballad in the *Parady d'Amours;* (3) that the ballad as it appears in G represents its original form, written presumably for use in that version; (4) that the F ballad shows distinct traces of adaptation for use in that version, where it is saved from incongruity only by its allegorical [1] interpretation.

V. The Plan of the Legend and the Structure of the Prologue.

It has already been said, in the preceding chapter, that the ballad is not to be taken literally as representing the plan of the *Legend.* This is evident enough from the fact that in the nine legends that are extant Chaucer has told the stories of two heroines, Medea and Philomela, who are not named in the ballad. In a line common to both versions (G 186, F 283), he has told us of nineteen ladies who constitute an inner circle about Alcestis, and who are, generally speaking, identical with the ladies named in the ballad. In his injunction to the poet, however, the god of Love has not committed him to a definite list of names, but has given him wide latitude both as to metres and subject matter.

A too literal interpretation of a similar enumeration in the Introduction to the Man of Law's Tale (*Canterbury Tales,* B 60–77) has given rise to an unnecessary difficulty. Speaking of Chaucer's many stories of lovers, the Man of Law says:

[1] That is, the allusions to wifehood and fidelity are somewhat justified if they are seen to apply to the actual patroness of the poem already invoked and glorified under the figure of the daisy. Neither Richard nor his queen need have been offended by the later identification with Alcestis in F 513 as,

> She that for her husbonde chus to dye,
> And eek to goon to helle, rather than he;

for, since Alcestis is not a creation of Chaucer's own imagination, he must take her as she is, if at all. There is no necessity to press the allegory to the literal fulfilment of details. Anne is merely credited with devotion sufficient for a similar sacrifice had need required. The royal pair might as reasonably have been indignant at being likened to tercel and formel in the *Parliament of Birds.*

Who-so that wol his large volume seek
Cleped the Seintes Legende of Cupyde,
There may he seen the large woundes wyde
Of Lucresse, and of Babilan Tisbee;
The swerd of Dido for the fals Enee;
The tree of Phillis for hir Demophon;
The pleinte of Dianire and Hermion,
Of Adriane and of Isiphilee;
The bareyne yle stonding in the see;
The dreynte Leander for his Ero;
The teres of Eleyne, and eek the wo
Of Brixseyde, and of thee, Ladomëa;
The crueltee of thee, queen Medëa,
Thy litel children hanging by the hals
For thy Iason, that was of love so fals!
O Ypermistra, Penelopce, Alceste
Your wyfhod he comendeth with the beste!
But certeinly no word ne wryteth he
Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee.

It is obvious that this list does not coincide either with the legends as we have them, or with the names mentioned in the ballad. The discrepancy in names and the fact that the Man of Law speaks of the book as a "large volume," led Düring[1] to assume that the ten legends necessary to complete the scheme as suggested in the *Prologue* were actually written, though now lost. His view, however, did not meet with general acceptance. Concerning the problem, Skeat remarks,[2] "There is no reason for supposing that he ever wrote complete tales about Deianira, Hermione, Hero, Helen, Briseis, Laodomia, or Penelope, any more than he did about Alcestis. But it is highly probable that just at the period of writing his Introduction to the *Man of Law's Prologue* he was seriously intending to take up again his 'Legend' and was planning how to continue it." A similar opinion was held by ten Brink,[3] who connected with Chaucer's supposed intention to complete the *Legend* his revision of the *Prologue*, and assumed that the variations between the ballad and the list just cited were indications of a change of plan. The fact that lines 554–559 of F, which seem to mention the original plan of the *Legend*, are

[1] *Chaucer's Werke*, I, 272.
[2] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, xxvi.
[3] *Englische Studien*, XVII, 18.

wanting in G, he regarded as strong confirmation of these indications and a clear proof that F represents the original plan. The lines in question are as follows:

> Thise other ladies sittinge here arowe
> Ben in thy balade, if thou canst hem knowe,
> And in thy bokes alle thou shalt hem finde;
> Have hem now in thy Legend alle in minde.

To this Koch replied that it was all quite true, but that it merely served to prove that after Chaucer had deviated from his original plan, he thought it necessary to add these lines as a justification of the greater freedom which he had assumed. That two such diametrically opposed conclusions can be drawn from the same set of facts is due, apparently, to a decided difference in the interpretation of the lines; ten Brink takes them literally assuming that *thise other ladies* means the nineteen heroines, and that the injunction of the poet is in effect, "Remember in your Legend *all* the ladies who are named in the ballad." Koch, it would seem, restricts the passage to no such literal sense, regarding it as an allusion to the whole company of faithful women, many of whom are properly included in the sense of the ballad, though they are not named in it. The poet is enjoined to have all of them in mind, and to glorify them all, so far as possible, in his Legend.

In favor of this latter interpretation it may be remarked that the qualifying clause of the line,

> Ben in thy balade, *if thou canst hem knowe*,

has little meaning if the line is to be taken literally, and that the immediate context,

> I mene of hem that ben in thy knowinge
> For her ben twenty thousand mo sittinge
> Than thou knowest,

certainly implies that the whole passage is meant to be taken as comprehensive and general. Moreover, ten Brink has failed to note that the real plan of the *Legend* is indicated in a passage which is common to both versions (G 538–540, F 549–551):

> But now I charge thee, upon thy lyf,
> That in thy Legend thou make of this wyf,
> Whan thou hast othere smale mad before ;

Any other plans beyond this, Chaucer must have regarded as subject to change at any time before the stories were actually written, and it does not seem clear that so long as this original injunction was obeyed he could have felt it binding upon him either to add to or to subtract from the text of the *Prologue*.

It is pertinent now to inquire further what the real significance of the allusion in the Introduction to the *Man of Law's Prologue*, is. We have seen that taken literally it presents difficulties which both Skeat and ten Brink pass over lightly. Why does Chaucer in speaking of his *Legend of Good Women* use a title which is not even hinted at in the work itself? Why does he call the rather slender collection of tales a large volume? Their answer to the latter question is, apparently, because he meant to proceed at once to make the work fulfil the prophetic description which conceived it as already completed. Now Chaucer had already abandoned enough unfinished poems to make him aware of the danger of such borrowing from the future, and, moreover, he was at this time engaged upon a work which drew more heavily upon his interest and his powers than any other that he had ever undertaken. That he ever seriously intended to break in upon his work on the Tales to take up the *Legend*, with the promise of making it a *large volume*, is, on the face of it, highly improbable.

Such an improbable conclusion is by no means forced upon us by the allusion of the Man of Law to Chaucer's *Legend*, for that allusion is admittedly inexact, both in naming the book and in describing its bulk, and we have no right to demand of it an exact enumeration of its contents. The description of the subject matter is, like the title, poetical ; and some of the names rest upon no other foundation than their mention in the ballad or their implied inclusion among the host of women who have been as "trewe as steele." Chaucer has merely given himself free rein in writing on a favorite subject, and not being concerned about future students of his chronology, has taken no pains to confine his poetry within the limits of exact and literal description.

A more determined effort to convict Chaucer of a change of plan from F to G, in this case with reference to the structure of the *Prologue* itself, is made by Lowes.[1] He says: "Structurally regarded, the B-version[2] of the *Prologue* falls into two clearly distinguishable parts. The first includes ll. 1–196, and, without any hint whatever of a vision, is devoted to the panegyric of the daisy and the detailed account of a day spent in its honor in the mede. . . . . The second part, including the last 383 lines of the version, is given up to the vision of the god of Love, the nineteen ladies, and Alceste." Lowes endeavors to show that the plan of the first part of F is imitated from Deschamps' *Lay de Franchise*, and that of the second, from Froissart's *Paradys d'Amours*, and argues that G adheres less closely to this derived plan, and may therefore be regarded as a revision made when the influence of the originals was no longer strongly felt.

To this it should be answered first of all that the bifurcation of F at line 196 is entirely arbitrary. The two parts are indeed distinguishable, as are the actual and dream portions of the Duchesse; but they are not structurally distinct, nor is the plan faulty. In the first part of F according to this division, we have (1) an expression of the poet's regard for old books, (ll. 1–39); (2) an account of his habitual devotion in the spring time to the daisy, which wins him away from books, (ll. 40–105); (3) the story of a specific day's devotion in an actual meadow, beginning early in the morning (ll. 106-107),

> . . . In my herte I fele yit the fyr,
> That made me to ryse er hit wer day.

To these words line 197 directly corresponds, marking the end of the same day:

> Whan that the sonne out of the south gan weste,
> . . . . . .
> Hoom to myn hous ful swiftly I me spedde
> To goon to reste.

When the poet has fallen asleep in his "litel herber," the experiences of the day bear fruit in a dream which transports him at

[1] Lowes, p. 635.

[2] *i. e.* F.

once to the same flowery meadow. There he sees approaching him the god of Love and his queen, who is instantly seen to represent the daisy. Such is the connection between the two parts of F, a connection which, in my opinion, is entirely adequate both in thought and in form.

Leaving aside for the moment, however, the question of the structure of F, we may next inquire to what extent the influence of the two French poems is more apparent in F than in G. The assertion that Chaucer has imitated the plan of the *Lay de Franchise* is based upon the following of its characteristics:

(1) Its concentration of May-day observances on the daisy.

(2) Its lack of a dream setting.

(3) Its use of the personified daisy as the central figure.

(4) The fact that she speaks not as mistress but as a favored subject.

(5) Her individualization by dress.

These characteristics, however, all belong to G as well as to F. It is true that no hint of a dream occurs in lines 1–196 of F, but that feature is represented in the latter part of F where we must look also *for the third, fourth, and fifth* of the list cited above. In G we have, up to the appearance of the god of Love, a brief description of the actual day, 8 lines (89–96), and a rather full description of the dream day, 40 lines (104–143). In F the relation is reversed, and there is a full account of the real day, 100 lines (103–202), and a very brief account, 3 lines (209–211) of the dream, into which the god of Love comes at once. The difference between the two versions, therefore, is not so great as might seem, for it is merely a difference in the treatment of the same material. The use of actual experiences to furnish a motive for a highly imaginative dream is so conventional that no importance need be attached to the presence or absence of a dream setting in the Lay.

The really important question is this; which of these arrangements is the better and therefore most likely to represent a revision? I cannot but feel that in F as compared with G, two advantages are gained: an adequate occasion is provided for the very significant vision of the god of Love; and the dream is reserved for the

supernatural part of the poem, which is heightened by its contrast with the real.

To justify his assertion of a close agreement between the second part of F and the *Paradys d'Amours*, Lowes cites[1] the following parallels: "the offender found in Love's domain and charged with trespassing; the further charge of heresy against Love's law, based on what the offender has said or sung; the distinct recognition, on the part of the lady in royal habit, that her master owes mercy to the suppliant; ignorance on the part of the offender that this lady is after all someone of whom he has already known; the plea of repentance on the offender's part or on his behalf, and the specific glorification of the poet's lady, centering in a balade under the name or form of the daisy. That is to say," continues Lowes, "the framework, the cadre of the *Paradys* is in striking agreement with that of the second part of the B-version of the *Prologue*."

Now all this is quite true, but it is also true that the framework of the *Paradys* agrees equally well with the plan of G. It is possible that Lowes considerably overestimates the direct influence of the French poem, but whatever that influence was there is no adequate ground for assigning more of it to one version than to the other. In the list quoted above the first feature that is not literally represented in G is the plea of repentance. The line (F 368),

Or him repenteth utterly of this,

is peculiar to F; but it is to be noted that this is not a plea of repentance, either by the culprit or in his behalf, but one of several possible grounds of forgiveness recited by the queen. "He mighte doon hit," she says, inadvertantly, or because he was bidden, or he may be penitent. As a matter of fact such a plea is never made in either version, but the poet to the last insists that he meant no harm, and seeks to defend himself until silenced by the queen with the words, "Lat be thyn arguinge."

What is apparently a more important variation in plan is to be found in the ballad, which in G is certainly less of "a specific

[1] Lowes, p. 652.

glorification of the poet's lady" than in F. I have already shown, however, that the ballad in F is an Alcestis poem and not an imitation of Froissart's ballad, nor in itself associated with the daisy cult. What remains of the parallel is merely that there is in each a ballad recited in praise of a lady, not even in each the mistress of the singer. This is of course no parallel at all; and moreover the fact of the insertion of a ballad into the poem is true of both versions.

When we remember that although the assertion of direct influence upon the plan of the *Prologue* was supported by an arbitrary division of F into two parts and the assigning of one French poem to each, it was found necessary to look in the second part of F for three of the five parallels with the *Lay de Franchise*, we need not be surprised to find the results of such an assertion somewhat inconclusive. All the essential parallels are, in fact, found in G as well as in F, and the whole argument based upon the plan of the poems proves nothing more than a general rather than a specific influence of the French poems upon Chaucer, without the slightest evidence of the priority of F.

There still remains to fortify the argument which I have just discussed, the series of verbal parallels, first pointed out by Lowes,[1] with various French poems including the two in question. Lowes uses the F version only, however, and before we accept any conclusion as to the bearing of his comparison upon the question of the plan of G, it will be fair to put the G version in parallel columns with his citations from the two French poems with which we are concerned.

G Prologue.	Paradys d'Amours, ll. 1633–5.
40 Now have I thereto this condicioun	Cascune flour a par li son merite ;
41 That of alle the floures in the mede,	Mès je vous di, tant que pour me partie,
42 Than love I most these floures whyte and rede,	Sus toutes flours j'aime la margherite.
	lines 1621–2
	. . . . flours petites
43 Swiche as men callen daysies in our town,	Que nous appelons margerites.
	Lay de Franchise, ll. 14, 27–30.
44 To hem have I so greet affeccioun,	Le premier jour de ce mois de plaisance.

[1] Lowes, p. 612.

45 As I seyd erst, whan comen is the May,	. . . . .
46 That in my bed ther daweth me no day	De mon hostel me pars au point du jour
47 That I nam up, and walking in the mede	Prins et sousprins d'amoureuse dolour
48 To seen these floures. . . .	M'acheminay pensant par une plaine A la beauté de la tresdouce flour
	lines 44–50
51 And whan the sonne ginneth for to weste,	Et au vespre, quant il (soleil) fait son retour
52 Than closeth hit, and draweth hit to reste,	Ses fueilles clot, que nul ne la malmaine
53 So sore hit is afered of the night,	En demonstrant qu'elle est vrai et certaine
54 Til on the morwe, that hit is dayes light.	Et qu'en clarté veult monstrer son atour; Mais en obscur tient si clos son demaine Qu'il n'est mesdis n'autre chose villaine Qui nul temps puist en lui faire demour.

The right-hand column above includes all the lines cited by Lowes from the *Paradys* and the *Lay* as parallel to the F version. The relation of these lines to G may now be considered in detail. Since lines 40–48 are identical, with one important exception,[1] in both versions, we may pass them at once. Lines 51 and 52, however, deserve closer examination, for they are much nearer to the French than are the corresponding lines of F. Those lines (F 60–63) are as follows:

> And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,
> As sone as ever the sonne ginneth weste,
> To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
> For fere of night, so hateth she derknesse!

Here the description is not concerned about the daisy at first hand, as in G and in the Lay, but about the poet, the point of view being changed. The verbal and structural parallels involved in the statement that, *when the sun goes to the west the daisy closes,* are consequently wanting. This seems to me remarkably like the

[1] The variation between *these floures* in G and *this flour* in F cannot be assigned to the French, because the allusion in Chaucer is purely literal, and there is, of course, no parallel in sense or structure. Its significance as an evidence of revision is considered later.

revision, with regard only to the context, of lines originally written under the influence of a foreign original.[1]

Such a revision seems to me quite sufficient to account for the lines which immediately follow, and which may at first sight seem to be closer to the French than G 53 and 54. These are F 64, 65:

> Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the brightness
> Of the sanne, for ther hit wol unclose.

The only verbal parallel here is *brightness—clarté*, for *hir chere* and *son atour* are certainly not equivalent save in the sense that they are different figures of speech for the same literal original. Chaucer can hardly be said to have followed the sense of the French, unless it be in the juxtaposition of light and darkness, a feature which is fully represented in G 53, 54. If a French source were needed for these lines of F a better might be found in lines 41, 42 of the Lay,

> Car au souleil quant il rent sa luour
> S'euvre la flour, tant est humble et humaine;

I believe, however, that an adequate source can be found nearer at hand in the line of G (54),

> Til on the morowe that hit is dayes light,

and perhaps line 48,

> To seen these floures agein the sonne sprede.

[1] What may perhaps be fairly called another parallel, and one that is restricted to G, is found in line 58,

> As wel in winter as in somer *newe*.

This should be compared with *Paradys d'Amours*, ll. 1636–8,

> Car en tous temps, plueve, gresille ou gelle,
> Soit la saisons ou fresque, ou laide, ou nette,
> Ceste flour est gracieuse et *nouvelle*.

Lowes, who mentions the parallel, rejects it as not verbal; but the fact that the word *nouvelle* is translated by *newe* in the same relation, together with the fact that Chaucer has apparently used the lines of the *Paradys* just preceding this, furnishes reasonable ground for thinking this direct borrowing. If it be so, we have another indication of priority in G.

Chaucer has simply expanded the antithesis of G, *night* vs. *dayes light*, into

> For fere of night, so hateth she derknesse!
> Hir chere is pleynly sprad in . . . brightnesse.

It is such expansions that one expects in a revision. Had Chaucer written F as an original "with his eye on Deschamps," these lines (64 and 65) would have been the first in which he described the daisy directly, as Deschamps does throughout, and not from the point of view of the poet. Here, if anywhere, we should have expected unmistakable evidences of borrowing; yet it is here that we find them least convincing.

Unless I greatly misjudge the evidence submitted above, the appeal to verbal parallels to prove that the plan of F, and not that of G, was based on the *Paradys d'Amours* and the *Lay de Franchise* not only does not strengthen the argument, but positively weakens it. It does seem probable that Chaucer drew upon those poems for certain features of the *Prologue*; but neither in that probability nor in any other consideration that has been brought to my notice, do I find any evidence that invalidates the priority of G.

B. THE TWO VERSIONS COMPARED IN DETAIL.

In order to test the conclusions reached by an examination of the larger variations between the *Prologues*, and at the same time to find surer ground for an opinion as to their order, a detailed comparison of variants, line by line, is next undertaken. The following statistics will serve to give a clearer idea of the nature of these variants:

Lines in G	545
Lines in F	579
Lines common to G and F	280
Lines partly identical in both	165
Lines peculiar to G	100
Lines peculiar to F	134

It is to be noted that of the 100 lines peculiar to G 52, or more than half, occur in a single passage, the reproof of the god of Love; whereas these additions to the common stock which are peculiar to F are not only more numerous but also more evenly distributed. Besides the three classes of minor variants already mentioned, namely, lines peculiar to one version, or to the other, or partly identical in both, there is a fourth class consisting of lines which, though common to both versions, have been transposed in the course of revision to a new context. Of the 545 lines of G 55 are reproduced, either wholly or in part, in F with a different relation to the plan of the *Prologue*. Taking advantage of the presumption already established in favor of F, I shall discuss, from the point of view of G as an original, first, the lines differently placed in the two versions; second, the lines peculiar to G and those which displace them in F; third, the lines peculiar to F which have not been otherwise noticed; and finally, the lines which are partly identical in both.

I. Lines Transposed in the Revision.

G 55–58.

> This dayeseye, of alle floures flour,
> Fulfild of vertu and of alle honour,
> And ever y-lyke fair and fresh of hewe,
> As wel in winter as in somer newe.

This description of the daisy immediately follows the account of the flower's going to rest, and is concluded in G by the line,

> Fain wolde I preisen, if I coude aright;

In F the same lines precede the going to rest, and are used not as in G merely as a description of the flower which the poet would gladly praise, but as a ground for the reverential devotion which he pays to it. With their context they appear in F as follows:

> F 51–56 So glad am I whan that I have presence
> Of hit (to) doon al maner reverence,
> *As she, that is of alle floures flour,*
> *Fulfilled of al vertu and honour,*
> *And ever y-lyke fair, and fresh of hewe;*
> *And I love hit, and ever y-lyke newe,—*

Obviously the passage, as it is placed in F, lends itself readily to interpretation as an allegorical compliment to a lady typified by the flower, whereas in G it is disconnected from what precedes it, and provides a motive only for the poet's complaint of inability to praise the daisy fittingly. The implication of the passage in F with the context, which contains numerous lines peculiar to that version, and its service as a motive for what precedes and as a logical transition to the daisy's good night, as compared with the plain conventionality of its use in G, make it hard to believe that in this case the process of revision could be from F to G.

G 71–80.

A second transposed passage is G 71–80, ten lines which make up Chaucer's disavowal of partisanship in the Flower and the Leaf controversy. These ten lines appear in F condensed into nine and transposed to 188–196. In G the passage with its immediate context reads:

G 68–80 I hope that they wil nat ben evel apayd,
Sith hit is seid in forthering and honour
Of hem that either serven leef or flour.
For trusteth wel, I ne have nat undertake
As of the leef, ageyn the flour to make;
Ne of the flour to make, ageyn the leef,
No more than of the corn ageyn the sheef.
For, as to me, is leefer noon ne lother;
I am with-holde yit with never nother.
I not who serveth leef, ne who the flour;
That nis nothing the entent of my labour.
For this werk is al of another tunne,
Of olde story, er swich stryf was begunne.

In F the couplet corresponding to G 69–70 is made to serve another purpose, as follows:

F 81–83 Sin that ye see I do hit in the honour
Of love, and eek in service of the flour,
Whom that I serve as I have wit or might.

That is, it is made to introduce the ardent invocation of the daisy which occupies ll. 83–96 of F, and which is wholly wanting in G. After this invocation come the four lines beginning,

But wherefor that I spak, to give credence—

which are in the main common to both versions, though differently employed; next comes the description of the actual May scene, which is much fuller in F than in G; and finally, the disavowal introduced as follows:

F 186–196 I pray to god that faire mot she falle,
And all that loven floures, for hir sake!
But natheles, ne wene nat that I make
In preysing of the flour agayn the leef
No more than of the corn agayn the sheef.
For as to me nis lever noon ne lother.
I nam with-holden yit with never nother;
Ne I not who serveth leef, ne who the flour;
Wel brouken they hir service or labour;
For this thing is al of another tonne,
Of olde story, er swich thing was be-gonne.

The changes that have been made within these lines will be discussed in another chapter. We are concerned here only with the evidence that may be found in their transposition. The difference between the two *Prologues* in that regard may be illustrated as follows :

In G	In F
The apology to earlier writers.	The apology to earlier writers.
The disavowal of partisanship.	The invocation of the daisy.
The allusion to belief in old books.	The allusion to belief in old books.
The actual May scene.	The actual May scene (enlarged).
The poet's return and his slumber in the arbor.	*The disavowal of partisanship.*
The dream May scene.	The poet's return and his slumber in the arbor.
The coming of the god of Love.	The dream scene and the coming of the god of Love.

Other considerations being equal, it is perhaps more probable that the reviser removed a passage to a later point in order to make room for something new than that he did the converse. There are other considerations, however, which weigh in favor of the same conclusion. In G the disavowal is introduced by the assertion that the poem is written in honor of them "that either serven leef or flour." In F that first allusion to the allegorical controversy appears as part of a fervent appeal to lovers "that can make of sentement" to help whether they be with the leaf or with the flower. All other reference to the strife of flower and leaf is deferred until Chaucer's praise of the daisy has, in F 183–186, reached its climax, a climax which it never does reach in G, when the disavowal with its, "But natheles," comes in most appropriately. Chaucer says in effect: 'Although I do praise the daisy thus fervently, it must not be assumed on that account that I am a partisan in the Flower and Leaf controversy.' The disavowal is thus logically related to the main purpose of F, whereas in G it is merely incidental to an apology to the earlier poets after whom Chaucer comes "glening here and there." It is much easier to believe, therefore, that it was displaced from its position in G in order to make way for the invocation, which is inserted in accordance with a change of purpose, and that it was

put after the poet's actual devout celebration of the daisy because that arrangement seemed to him a better one, than it is to believe the converse process.

G 93–106.

Another transposition appears in the account of the poet's return home in the evening, his slumber in the arbor, and his dream, which are deferred in F until after the description of the May scene and are found in lines 197–211. This produces an important change in the plan of the poem. In each version there are two May-day experiences, one real, the other dreamed. In G the real May-day is briefly described in four lines, 89–92, which are followed by an account of the home-coming and the sleep in the arbor, in the course of which the poet dreams of a May-day in the meadow, and of the appearance of the god of Love. In F the real May-day is very fully described,—much more fully than the dream scene in G,—and is followed by a dream scene in which the god of Love at once appears with his retinue.

This transfer of the description of the spring-time scene from dream to reality has been regarded as an improvement by both Skeat[1] and Legouis.[2] Binz, in his review of Legouis,[3] though he admits the superiority of the F version in certain respects, is disposed to doubt it here. He believes that the wonderful vision of the god of Love is better prepared for in G than in F, where it is too abruptly introduced. This question, which has already been touched on in a preceding chapter, is too much a matter of subjective opinion to be settled by an appeal to facts; but it cannot be denied that the description in F is fuller and richer than in G, that it is, as Legouis says, the picture of a real scene, and that there is a gain in concreteness and life in making it an actual experience. Moreover, in my opinion, the account of the poet's all-day-long devotion to the daisy, which is the climax of the description, provides a fully adequate motive for the immediate appearance in his dream of the personified daisy, Alcestis, "with florouns smale, . . . for al the world right as a dayesye." I have no

[1] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, xviii.
[2] Legouis, p. 62.
[3] *Anglia, Beiblatt*, XI, 234 f.

hesitation, therefore, in regarding this transposition also as an after-thought of the poet's which has resulted in a more picturesque as well as a more consistent and symmetrical poem in the F version.

G 338–339.

The last transposition to be noticed affects two lines of G which are moved back in F. The couplet,

> This man to you may wrongly been accused,
> Ther as by right him oghte been excused,

follows in G the plea of Alcestis based on the presence of false accusers in the court of Love, which is included in lines 328–337. In F these two lines, with two new ones, precede this passage instead of following it, and take the place of four lines omitted in F. Accordingly, in F we read,

> F 348–352 And if ye nere a god, that knowen al,
> Than might hit be, as I you tellen shal;
> *This man to yow may falsely been accused*
> *Thereas by right him oghte been excused,*
> *For* in your court is many a losengour,

and so on. The value of the lines peculiar to the two versions will be discussed later. It is quite obvious, I think, that the arrangement of G, in which the couplet follows the allusion to false accusers without any grammatical connection with it, has been improved in F by transposing the couplet so that it precedes the allusion and is bound to it by a causal connective.

Without pushing the argument too far, it can be fairly said that every change of lines from one position in G to another in F can be accounted for as improvements, on the hypothesis of a revision proceeding from G to F, inspired by one or both of two motives, namely, the improvement of the poem, and the celebration of the lady who is symbolized by the daisy. If we suppose the revision to have been from F to G, we must assume that Chaucer weakened his poem in order to accomplish some object important enough to override other considerations, an assumption for which no external evidence exists.

II. Lines Peculiar to the G-Version.

Of the 545 lines of the *Prologue* in G 100 are not reproduced either wholly or in part in F. F, however, is longer by 34 lines than G, and contains 134 lines not found in G. Lines which stand alone in either version are significant as to the nature of the revision, for they must either have been deliberately rejected or deliberately inserted. I shall first discuss lines peculiar to G, taking up F only when it is evident that one passage has displaced another.

G 50.

44–50 To hem have I so greet affeccioun,
As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bed ther daweth me no day
That I nam up, and walking in the mede
To seen these floures agein the sonne sprede,
Whan hit upriseth by the morwe shene,
**The longe day, thus walking in the grene.*[1]

Line 50 is the last of a sentence, and is so loosely connected with what precedes it that it can be dropped out with no violence to the structure. The line does add something to the thought but nothing that is absolutely essential to it. One might even think of it as having been written chiefly for the sake of completing the couplet. Hence it is not at all such a line as would be naturally added in a revision. On the other hand, it is precisely such a line as could be readily dropped out to make way for others.

The lines which, as I believe, have taken its place read with their context as follows.

F 49–52 Whan hit upryseth erly by the morwe;
**That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe,*
**So glad am I whan that I have presence*
**Of hit, to doon al maner reverence.*

If we suppose that F represents an earlier form we must explain why these three lines were rejected to make room for the prosaic and unnecessary line which corresponds to them in G. Clearly

[1] The asterisk is used in accordance with the system of Skeat to indicate lines which occur in one version only.

the lines are a part of the poet's glorification of the Queen, but that is clear to us only when the whole *Prologue* is considered. With other more obvious allusions to the Queen removed, these lines might have been left untouched. Neither ten Brink's hypotheses, therefore, nor Koeppel's, affords us a satisfactory motive for Chaucer's changing F 49–52 to G 50. The enrichment and improvement of the text is ground enough for believing that he did substitute F 49-52 for G 50.

G 54.

51–54 And whan the sonne ginneth for to weste,
Than closeth hit, and draweth hit to reste,
So sone hit is afered of the night,—
**Til on the morwe, that hit is dayes light.*

Line 54, like line 50 above, is the last line of a sentence and is not very essential to the thought. It can, therefore, be easily dropped out in revision. This passage of four lines appears in F without it, introduced by a new line which, in a sense, takes its place.

F 60–64 **And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,*
As sone as ever the sonne ginneth weste,
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
For fere of night, so hateth she derknesse!

The starred line in F introduces the passage and links it to the context by telling of the interest of the poet in the daisy's going to rest. It is a most essential line and the least likely to be sacrificed in a revision undertaken to improve the poem. As a whole the passage in F is more compact and vigorous. The rather awkward parenthesis of line G 53 is avoided. The sudden change of number from "to seen *these floures*" in l. 48 to "Than closeth *hit*" in l. 52, and the consequent liability of confusion of the antecedents of *hit* in l. 49, which refers to the sun, and *hit* used three times in 52 and 53 to refer to the daisy are other faults in G removed by the revision.

G 60.

55–60 This dayesye, of alle floures flour,
Fulfild of vertu and of alle honour,
And ever y-lyke fair and fresh of hewe,

As wel in winter as in somer newe,
Fain wolde I preisen if I coude aright;
**But wo is me, hit lyth nat in my might!*

We have seen above that lines 55–58 of this passage are transposed in F to a different context. This transposition of course made it necessary to recast lines 59 and 60, which depend grammatically on what precedes them. Chaucer did this, I believe, as follows:

F 64–67 *Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the brightnesse
*Of the sonne, for ther hit wol unclose.
**Allas! that I ne had English, ryme or prose,*
Suffisant this flour to preyse aright!

After the allusion to the daisy's fear of darkness (l. 63), he has inserted two new lines describing her love of light, and then the sprightly interjection in which he laments his inability to praise her worthily. This interjection seems to me much better than the colder and more formal "Fain wolde I preisen" of G, and the changes throughout the passage suggest decidedly a revision of G to produce F.

Turning from the consideration of single lines we may next notice the general effect of the changes just discussed. Lowes[1] endeavors to show that G 48–60 are superior in structure to the corresponding lines of F because they follow the time order more closely, and are the result of changing a "loosely-linked cento into a compact close-knit unit."

With his sweeping judgment in their favor, I cannot at all agree. Judged by his own somewhat arbitrary standard of chronological sequence, F is quite as consistent as G, and to my mind more coherent. In F we have two hints of the time of day, each from the point of view of the poet. In lines 46–48, the morning,

. . . ther daweth me no day
That I nam up and walking in the mede
To seen this flour ageín the sonne sprede:

and in lines 60–61, the evening,

And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,
As sone as ever the sonne ginneth weste
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste.

[1] Lowes, p. 659 ff.

Lines 64–65,

> Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the brightnesse
> Of the sonne, for ther hit wol unclose,

are not, as Lowes says, a return to the day again,—though he justifies such a return in G 54 as "completing the circle of the twenty-four hours,"—but merely a counter statement of the daisy's love of light in contrast with her fear of darkness described in the preceding line. No more logical transition is needed, and there is, as we have seen, no necessity for making Deschamps responsible for the appearance of the lines at this point.

The first half of the description is equally coherent. After telling us, as also in G, the fact that he is up early in the morning to see the daisy, he continues,

> That blisful sight softneth all my sorwe,

and goes on to explain and justify this early morning devotion, which in G is merely stated as a fact. The whole passage (lines 50–59) is a consistent elaboration of this thought, and all belongs by structure as well as by logical connection with what precedes it.

The general description of the daisy in G consists of three distinct sentences, all abruptly ended and without graceful transitions, and lacks moreover some ten lines of F the omission of which is not accounted for.

G 85–88.

> 81–88 But wherfor that I spak, to yeve credence
> To bokes olde and doon hem reverence,
> Is for men shulde autoritees beleve,
> Thereas ther lyth non other assay by preve.
> **For myn intent is, or I fro yow fare,*
> **The naked text in English to declare*
> **Of many a story, or elles of many a geste,*
> **As autours seyn; leveth hem if yow leste!*

The straightforward and conventional character of these lines has been already noticed. They constitute the climax of a sort of prologue to the *Prologue*, and very properly state the purpose of the poem. The old book and the dream are a favorite convention of Chaucer's for introducing a poem. Here he has used them to

introduce and justify a collection of old stories. There is nothing in these lines to indicate that the poet had more than a single purpose as he wrote them, and nothing whatever to justify us in thinking that they represent a second thought.

The corresponding passage in F is quite different.

F 97–102 But wherfor that I spak, to give credence
To olde stories, and doon hem reverence,
And that men mosten more thing beleve
Then men may seen at eye or elles preve?
**That shall I seyn, whan that I see my tyme;*
**I may not al at ones speke in ryme.*

These lines, particularly the last couplet, do look very much like a second thought. Certainly the poet would be much more likely to half-apologize for not doing something that he had done in the earlier draft, than to make such an apology a part of a first version. It is easy to imagine the mental process by which G was changed into F, and not at all easy to imagine the converse. Moreover F, in this case, as often, shows the better art. Chaucer intends later to represent himself as directed by Alcestis to write as penance for his offenses against love, the stories of faithful women, gathering his material from history. There is no reason why he should anticipate this poetical device by telling us in the beginning of the *Prologue*, and that in a prosaic and conventional manner, precisely what he is going to do.

G 91.

90–91 And I had romed al the someres day,
**The grene medew, of which that I yow tolde,*

This single starred line needs no special comment. It will be seen presently that the whole passage of which it is a part is displaced in F by much livelier and fuller description of the scene.

G 105 and 107.

105–108 **And that I romed in that same gyse,*
To seen that flour, as ye han herd devyse.
**Fair was this medew, as thoughte me overal;*
With floures swote enbrowded was it al.

In F the poet does not roam either in reality or in dream; he

kneels at daybreak beside the daisy to see it open its petals to the sunlight. Lines 107–108 are represented in F by,

—smale, softe, swote gras
F 118–122 That was with floures swote enbrouded al,
Of swich swetnesse and swich odour over-al,
That, for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or tree,
Comparisoun may noon y-maked be;

The line peculiar to G (l. 107) is a padded line, general in its description, and the first line of the sentence. Line 120 in F, which has the same rime-word, is closely involved in the structure, is specific in its description, and contains no superfluous words.

G 138–143.

*So ech of hem [doth wel] to creature.
*This song to herkne I dide al myn entente,
*For-why I mette I wiste what they mente.
*Til at the laste a larke song above:
*'I see' quod she, 'the mighty god of love!
*Lo! yond he cometh, I see his wings sprede!'

This is merely a transition passage by means of which we get on rapidly to the coming of the god of Love. The introduction of the lark to announce his appearance is an awkward convention, a reminiscence apparently of the *Parliament of Briddes*, in which the birds allegorically represent the personages whom the poem celebrates. Here they are merely incidental, and nowhere else in the G-version are they represented as speaking. The allusion to his spreading wings is also incongruous, for it is hard to conceive him at one moment as flying through the air and the next as walking beside his queen attended by a multitude of ladies.

Certainly, as he is described in this passage, the god of Love is ill-adapted to the allegorical representation of the king of England. In F, in which the poet sees the royal pair,

from a-fer com walking in the mede,

the description besides being more consistent with itself is more appropriate to an allegorical interpretation.

G 161–164.

158–164 Y-clothed was this mighty god of love
Of silk, y-brouded ful of grene greves;

A garlond on his heed of rose-leves
**Steked al with lilie floures newe;*
**But of his face I can not seyn the hewe.*
For sekirly his face shoon so brighte,
**That with the gleem a-stoned was the sighte;*

The three starred lines are wanting in F, where the *rose-leves* are transferred from the garland to the embroidery of Love's silken robe, and their place on his head is taken by a crown. The lines peculiar to F are,

F 228–231 . . . —A fret of rede rose-leves,
**The fresshest sin the world was first bigonne.*
**His gilte heer was corouned with a sonne,*
**Instede of gold, for hevinesse and wighte;*

That the change from a fresh garland of roses and lilies to a glittering crown points to a change in the allegory has already been noted by Legouis,[1] approved by Koch,[2] and made still more of by Bilderbeck.[3] It is another one of numerous indications that F is an occasional poem and G is not.

The four lines in G which describe the brightness of Love's face (ll. 162–5) are condensed into two in F, an undeniable improvement and an indication of revision from G to F. They read in F,

F 232 Therewith me thoughte his face shoon so brighte
That wel unnethes mighte I him beholde;

G 199–202.

**And after that they wenten in compas,*
**Daunsinge aboute this flour an esy pas,*
**And songen, as it were in carol-wyse,*
**This balade, which that I shal yow devyse.*

Since the ballad in F is not sung by the women, but is recited by the poet himself, these lines will not serve as an introduction to it. In F, consequently, their place is taken by the couplet,

**And therfor may I seyn, as thinketh me*
**This song in preysing of my lady fre*

[1] Legouis, p. 68.
[2] *Englische Studien*, xxx, 457.
[3] Bilderbeck, p. 85 f.

The significance of the variations in the use and the form of ballad have been discussed fully in another chapter. It may be noted here that though the dance is wanting in F, the song is preserved in the following lines not found in G,

And kneled down—
F 295–299 **And songen with o rois, 'Hele and honour*
**To trouthe of woman hede, and to this flour*
**That berth our alder prys in figuringe!*
**Hir whyte coroun berth the witnessinge.'*

The homage of the attendant ladies is not lost, therefore, though their ballad has been transferred to the poet because of a changed purpose in the poem.

The next starred line in G is

225 **Upon the softe and swote grene gras,*

a line which may have been omitted in F because the grass had already been so described in the description of the meadow (F l. 118),

Upon the smale softe swote gras,

G 247.

'For thou,' quod he, 'art therto nothing able.
**My servaunts been alle wyse and honourable,*
Thou art my mortal fo, and me warreyest.'

These lines appear in F as follows:

F 320–322 'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing able.
**Hit is my relik, digne and delytable,*
And thou my fo, and al my folk werreyest.'

The sense is better in F than in G, for the three lines 246, 247, and 248 are all more or less disconnected, and the transitions in sense are abrupt. There is a logical connection in thought in F between lines 320 and 321 which is wanting in G, and both the sense and the structure of the passage are improved by the antitheses of *hit* and *thou*. The change has the further effect of increasing the prominence of the daisy.

G 258–64.

255–66 Thou hast translated the Romauns of the Rose,
That is an heresye ageyns my lawe,
And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.
**And thinkest in thy wit, that is ful cool,*

**That he nis but a verray propre fool*
**That loveth paramours, to harde and hote.*
** Wel wot I ther-by thou beginnest dote*
**As olde foles, whan hir spirit fayleth;*
Than blame they folk, and wite not what hem ayleth.
**Hast thou nat mad in English eek the book*
How that Crisseyde Troilus forsook,
In shewinge how that wemen han don mis?

The lines in this passage which are peculiar to G constitute ten Brink's strongest evidence that G is a revised and later form. He notes[1] that it is one of three allusions to old age which are wanting in F. The others are,

G 315 As othere *olde foles* many a day,

which appears in F as,

F 337 As other *wrecches* han doon many a day;

and the third, upon which ten Brink does not depend in his argument,

G 400–401 *Whyl he was yong, he kepte your estat;
*I not wher he be now a renegat,

a couplet which is wholly wanting in F. Lines 106 and 107 of F,

*That in my herte I fele, *yit* the fyr
*That made me to ryse er hit wer day—

which Furnivall[2] takes to be an interesting allusion to Chaucer's age, ten Brink regards as indicating nothing more than an interval of time between the writing of the *Prologue* and the incident which it describes. When it is remembered that Chaucer has already[3] told us that his May-day rambles are habitual, it is fair to assume that his eagerness to see the daisy open to the sunshine on this occasion was no unusual thing. The "fyr" that impelled him was, therefore, the fire of youth and no isolated and remarkable impulse to which he could allude so specifically after a short interval. Although these lines are not the words of a man in his dotage, they, nevertheless, smack too strongly of the reminiscence

[1] *Englische Studien*, XVII, 14, n. 1.
[2] *Trial Forewords*, p. 105.
[3] Lines 36–39 of both versions.

of middle-age to be lightly brushed aside as having no reference whatever to a lapse of time.

Though it be granted, however, that the F version is not wholly without allusion to Chaucer's age, it cannot be denied that two distinct allusions to the doting folly of men who are no longer lovers are consistently wanting in F.[1] If these allusions are to be taken as serious autobiographical hints, there is some justice in ten Brink's argument that the version which contains them is, on the face of it, likely to be the earlier.

There is, however, nothing that warrants us in taking them so seriously. We might as well take literally Chaucer's self-depreciation in F 414,

> "Al be hit that he can nat wel endyte."

as additional proof, showing that he wrote F in his youth while conscious of his immaturity; or in G 29,

> "But as for me though that my wit be lyte,"

as another allusion to dotage. For some light on Chaucer's sober earnestness when he speaks of himself as a lover, compare his disclaimer in the *Parliament*, ll. 889–890,

> "For al be that I knowe not love in dede
> Ne wot how that he quyteth folk her hyre,"

with his hint at an eight-year-long love-sickness in the *Duchesse*, ll. 36–40. Chaucer is not to be held strictly to account for everything that he says about himself, for he is never half so serious as his critics.

Moreover, even if we do allow an element of autobiography in these allusions, it is hard to see why, since they are both relative and apply to Chaucer only as a lover, they may not as well be dated 1385 as 1393. ten Brink remarks that Chaucer does not allude to his old age in poems earlier than the *Legend*, and that he does so freely in later ones, namely, *Scogan* and the *Compleynt of Venus*.

[1] ten Brink, p. 14: Wir stehen daher vor der bezeichnenden thatsache, dass Gg. eine zweimalige anspielung auf Chaucer's alter (und altersschwäche) enthält, die Vulgata keine einzige.

Now it is generally agreed[1] that the *Envoy to Scogan* was probably written in 1393, the very year to which ten Brink assigns *Prologue F.* Chaucer was then probably not more than fifty-three years of age. In the Envoy he is writing a personal poem addressed to a friend, and the situation is therefore different from that of the *Legend of Good Women.* Still, if Chaucer can speak of himself as a gray-beard, too old to wake his muse again, when he is a little over fifty, he might easily be old enough at forty-five to be accused of lack of sympathy with lovers. The truth is that *Scogan* is jest and raillery from beginning to end, addressed to a man twenty years[2] his junior; and little of value as to Chaucer's real feeling is to be inferred from it. The Envoy to the *Compleynt of Venus,* which may have been written in 1394,[3] serves to illustrate further the spirit in which such allusions are made. In it Chaucer apologises for the work:

> "For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me,
> Hath of endyting al the soteltee
> Wel ny bereft out of my remembraunce,"

declaring that he cannot find rimes enough to follow Granson word by word, when he has actually outdone his original and made his translation an example of the highest skill in riming. The allusion is like the others purely jocular.

It still remains to be explained why, if these allusions to age are not serious enough to be taken as sufficient evidence for dating the poem, they are to be found only in the version which I regard on other grounds as the earlier. We have already seen that F is formally dedicated to the Queen, and that it is marked by a tone of courtliness consistent with that dedication and largely wanting in G. It seems to me not at all unlikely that all three of the passages mentioned by ten Brink were omitted in the course of the revision, because of their unnecessary personal bearing and their possible tendency toward coarseness. I am aware that I may in turn be accused of pushing the sense of these passages too far when I

[1] Koch, *Chronology of Chaucer's Writings,* p. 70, and note.
[2] Cf. Kittredge in Harvard *Studies in Philol. and Lit.,* I, 116 ff.
[3] Koch, *Chronology of Chaucer's Writings,* p. 72, n.

speak of their showing a tendency toward coarseness; but when I recall the sixteenth and seventeenth statutes of the *Court of Love*,[1] and remember the Ovidian origin of so much of the romantic tradition, I do not wonder that even in the fourteenth century Chaucer might have felt it to be in better taste to omit them from a poem dedicated to the queen whose marriage he had already celebrated in the *Parliament*.

G 267–312.

The long reproof of the god of Love beginning

> 267 But natheles, answere me now to this,

and ending,

> 311–312 But yit I sey, what eyleth thee to wryte
> The draf of stories, and forgo the corn?

is wholly wanting in F. The substance of the reproof is that Chaucer has neglected the stories of faithful women, of which he had an abundance in his books, and has preferred to write of the perfidy of Cressida.

As this is the most considerable passage peculiar to G, it has naturally provoked numerous conjectures. Skeat[2] at first found it hard to understand why Chaucer should here appeal to works against women; but afterward[3] modified his opinion. ten Brink based upon the mention of such books his most cogent argument for the later date of G. "These books," he said,[4] "are such as, so far as one can see, Chaucer knew only slightly or not at all during his second period, though they play a very significant rôle in his third period." Legouis,[5] insisting upon Chaucer's right to be judged first of all as a literary artist, argues that this tirade of the god of Love, including ll. 258–264, is out of keeping with the character of the god, whom it transforms into a verbose

[1] Skeat's *Chaucerian and Other Pieces*, p. 421 f. Cf. lines 435–469. This poem is, of course, non-Chaucerian and later than the *Legend of Good Women*, but it undoubtedly goes back to an older tradition quite familiar to Chaucer.

[2] *Legend of Good Women* (1889), p. xi.

[3] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, p. 302, n.

[4] *Englische Studien*, XVII, 15.

[5] Legouis, p. 61.

pedant. Hence, Legouis would say these passages were omitted in the revision.

Whatever may be said of the literary merit of the lines, it must be admitted, as Koeppel has pointed out,[1] that the books mentioned by the god of Love are not inappropriate here, for even Jerome concedes some goodness to women. ten Brink's chronological argument based upon them is at first sight convincing, but demands closer scrutiny.

The lines in which authors of stories about good women are named are as follows:

280–281 *What seith Valerie, Titus, or Claudian?
*What seith Ierome ageyns Iovinian?

The next twenty-four lines are a description of two chapters of *Jerome against Jovinian*. Then follows,

305–307 *What seith also the epistels of Ovyde
*Of trewe wyves, and of hir labour?
*What Vincent, in his Storial Mirour?

Six authors are here mentioned by name. Let us examine each in turn and see if any significance as to the chronology of the two *Prologues* can be found in them.

Valerie, I take to be Valerius Maximus,[2] whom Chaucer twice[3] mentions by name as one of his authorities for classical stories. Professor Bright has shown[4] that the otherwise inexplicable Eleanor of the *House of Fame* (l. 516) refers to Hamilcar, the account of whose dream Chaucer got from Valerius Maximus.

[1] *Anglia*, XIII, 174 ff.

[2] Skeat is certainly wrong in supposing that the reference is to Walter Mapes' *Valerius ad Rufinum*. See Lounsbury, *Chaucer Studies*, II, 276, and Köppel, *Anglia*, XIII, p. 182. As Köppel intimates, the epistle of Valerius is quite inappropriate as a source of stories about true women, and Valerius Maximus is not. In his *Factorum et dictorum Memorabilum*, Lib. IV, cap. vi, 1, the story of Alcestis is briefly told along with those of other women faithful in love. In Lib. II, cap. iv, 14, Valerius extravagantly praises the devotion of the Hindoo widows, who strive for the honor of cremation upon the pyre of the dead husband, and in other passages, II, i, 3; II, ii, 8; and III, ii, 9, narrates incidents showing the virtue and the courage of women.

[3] In the *Monk's Tale*, B 3910, and in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*, D, 1165.

[4] *Modern Language Notes*, IX, 241.

We may, therefore, be certain that Chaucer knew Valerius before he wrote either version of the *Prologue*, and the mention of Valerie has no bearing whatever on the problem of their relation to each other.

Livy, whether Chaucer actually used his works or not, is mentioned in the *Book of the Duchesse* (l. 1084) and Claudian, not to multiply evidence, in the *House of Fame* (l. 449). We come next to *Jerome ageyns Jovinian*, the work upon which particularly ten Brink bases his argument. This is evidently the book which Chaucer has especially in mind in the tirade of the god of Love, for fully half of that passage is a discussion of the contents of two chapters of Jerome's work. It is quite true that the same book is very extensively used in the *Wife of Bath's Prologue* (D 674 ff.) and in the *Franklin's Tale* (F 1367–1456); but it does not necessarily follow that the three allusions to the work are therefore to be assigned to the same date, or even to the same period in Chaucer's life. Positive evidence that Chaucer knew Jerome's treatise before he wrote either version is afforded by his mention of Marcia Catoun in both forms of the ballad (G 206, F 252). The reference here is, as Lounsbury points out,[1] to the daughter of Cato, the account of whose refusal to marry a second time is given in Jerome.[2] The fact that in the passage from which this account of Marcia Catoun is taken (the end of chapter 45 and the beginning of 46) Alcestis, Penelope, Laodamia, and Lucretia are also mentioned as heroic wives, may even imply that Chaucer had Jerome before him when he wrote the ballad, and derived some of his inspiration from him.

The argument that Chaucer did not know a work at the time of writing a certain poem, based solely on the fact that he apparently made no use of it, is in itself of doubtful force. In this case even that argument cannot apply, for we have evidence that Chaucer knew every one of the authorities named in the reproof before he wrote either version of the *Prologue*.

G 324–327:

> *He shal nat rightfully his yre wreke
> *Or he have herd the tother party speke.

[1] Lounsbury, *Studies in Chaucer*, II, 249.

[2] *Adversus Jovinianum*, I, 46.

*Al ne is nat gospel that is to yow pleyned ;
*The god of love herth many a tale y-feyned.

These four lines, which form part of the appeal of Alcestis in behalf of the accused poet, are wanting in F. In their place are found two new lines, F 348 and 349 :

*And if ye nere a god that knowen al,
*Than mighte hit be, as I yow tellen shal ;

and a couplet carried back, with slight change, from G 338–339 :

This man to yow may falsly been accused,
Ther as by right him oghte been excused.

In G, as I conceive it to have been written, the appeal of Alcestis including the four starred lines had reference only to the idea of a court of love in which Cupid himself is judge. There is no good reason for interpreting it to mean also the court of King Richard. F, however, is distinctly dedicated to the Queen, who is represented in it by Alcestis. In F, therefore, whatever Alcestis says to her lord is, to say the least, in danger of being applied to the king of England, and Chaucer may well have felt like toning down somewhat his admonitions to royalty. Yet there was no necessity for cutting out the whole passage. It could do no harm to intimate to the king that he was liable to hear envious slanders, or that a righteous lord should not be like the tyrants of Lombardy ; but to tell him that he ought not to wreak vengeance before hearing both sides, or refuse to listen to the complaints and petitions of his people would be too specific to be wise.

G 344–345 :

*Therefor he wroot the Rose and eek Crisseyde
*Of innocence, and niste what he seyde.
Or him was boden maken thilke tweye
Of som persone, and durste hit nat with-seye.

This couplet is wanting in F. Without it, however, *thilke tweye* of line 366 must refer to the mention of the two poems 33 lines back, which seems unlikely. If the presence of the lines in G is to be used as an argument that they were inserted in the course of a revision, we must suppose that Chaucer did not write them in

his original. It seems to me much more likely that the couplet has been lost from F by the carelessness of a scribe, or inadvertantly omitted by Chaucer in making his revision.

G 348.

*For he hath writen many a book er this,

In place of this line we have in F the line,

*Or him repenteth utterly of this.

Both lines are so disconnected from the context that either might have been readily substituted for the other. It is true, however, that the line in F adds a new thought, a new possible ground of excuse for the poet, and that the line in G does not, and is moreover rather meaningless and unessential as it stands. It is fair to assume that the better line is the later one.

G 360–364.

*And that him oweth, of verray duetee,
*Shewen his peple pleyn benignitee,
*And wel to here hir excusaciouns,
*And hir compleyntes and peticiouns,
*In duewe tyme, whan they shal hit profre.

G 368–369.

*And therto is a king ful depe y-sworn
*Ful many a hundred winter heer-biforn.

These lines are to be associated with ll. 324–327 discussed above. With them they make up eleven lines which I believe were omitted because they seemed inappropriate in an allegorical poem. If I understand ten Brink's view perfectly, he would have us believe that Chaucer revised the *Prologue* to make it less of an allegory, and at the same time on account of his changed relations to the court inserted these further criticisms of royal justice, which, if they are to express his personal pique, demand an allegorical interpretation. So practised a diplomatist as Chaucer could hardly have failed to recognize that criticism of royalty is at all times unfruitful if not unwise.[1]

[1] Bilderbeck (p. 96 ff.) argues that these allusions were removed because they had done their work and were no longer applicable to King Richard's administration. It seems doubtful, however, that Chaucer would have ventured to be so plain-spoken in the first instance.

G 400–401.

*Whyl he was yong, he kepte your estat ;
*I not wher he be now a renegat.

In a part of the *Prologue* in which there are few variations from G, F wholly lacks this couplet. It is either a slight expression of pique inserted by the disgruntled courtier in G, or it is a passage natural enough in G as a conventional prologue, but so personal as to be in bad taste in a poem in which the god of Love becomes a type of the King of England. It is in any case such a personal reference as the poet might have discarded on second thought. That he inserted it because he was seven or eight years older than when he wrote the first draft seems very unlikely.

G 414–415.

*And of the Wreched Engendring of Mankinde,
*As man may in pope Innocent y-finde ;

The presence of this couplet in G and not in F has given rise to various conjectures. Köppel, when he regarded G as the earlier version, supposed[1] that Chaucer began the *Wreched Engendring* before he wrote G and expecting to finish it mentioned it there, and that he later tired of the work and gave it up. Hence in the process of revision he dropped it out of F, and some years later made use of fragments of the incomplete translation in the *Man of Law's Tale*. At the same time he carried over the chaff figure in G, lines 311 and 529 to the *Man of Law's Tale*, l. 701.

ten Brink, having satisfied himself that G is to be regarded as a revision, of course rejected this explanation, and assumed that the mention of a work of Chaucer's in what he regarded as the later version was strong confirmation of his view. Now Chaucer lost his offices in December, 1386.[2] From that time until July 12, 1389, he was not, so far as we know, engaged on any public service. This fact and the significant one that in May, 1388, his pension was assigned to another justifies the belief that he was, during part of this period at least, in financial straits. Hence,

[1] Herrig's *Archiv*, LXXXIV, 406 ; LXXXV, 48.
[2] *Life Records of Chaucer*, p. XXXV and pp. 268, 269.

argues ten Brink, Chaucer's interest in the treatise of Pope Innocent, which he translated at this time, and hence his use in the *Man of Law's Tale*, written soon after, of the inappropriate stanzas on poverty.

All this hangs together excellently, but is it therefore trustworthy? If F was written in 1385 and G in 1393, Chaucer must certainly have done in the interim some work better worth mentioning and more appropriate to the context than the translation of Pope Innocent. Without attempting to fix the date of this translation, I may say that I am not at all convinced that it must have been made while Chaucer was himself suffering the pangs of poverty. He was not, so far as we know, in prison when he translated Boethius. Chaucer's fondness for Boethius and the presence of the *Melibeus* and the *Parson's Tale* among the Canterbury Tales may show us that his own taste and the taste of his age made it possible for him to find the *De Miseria Conditionis Humanae* interesting at any time. That his translation of it must have been made about 1387–1388 is therefore merely a conjecture, and a weak link in ten Brink's chain of argument. Another such link is the assumption that the stanzas on poverty translated from Innocent and prefixed to the *Man of Law's Tale* were dragged in because of the poet's personal feelings. However we may feel about it, Chaucer evidently regarded these stanzas as a suitable introduction to the tale, which, it must be remembered, is told in character. They are quite consistent in style with the tale itself, and a remote and formal approach to the subject is not inconsistent with the character of the Man of Law. It is improbable that Chaucer ever suffered such poverty as he apostrophises here, and is perhaps unlikely that, if he had, he would speak of it as he does in these stanzas. Last of all it may be remarked that ten Brink's date for the *Man of Law's Tale*, 1391, is also purely conjectural. Koch's guess[1] puts it about 1386, and Skeat[2] thinks that it was composed in 1380 and revised in 1387. My conclusion is that the couplet mentioning the *Wreched Engendring of Mankinde* has no significance as to the relative date of the two *Prologues*,

[1] *Chronology of Chaucer's Writings*, p. 79.
[2] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, 413.

and that its absence in F is due either to the error of a scribe or to Chaucer's feeling that it added nothing to the poem and might well be dropped out.

G 527–532.

525–532 Than seyde Love, a ful gret negligence
Was hit to thee, to write unstedfastnesse
*Of women, sit thou knowest hir goodnesse
*By preef, and eek by stories heer-biforn ;
*Let be the chaf, and wryt wel of the corn,
*Why noldest thou han writen of Alceste,
*And leten Criseide been a-slepe and reste?
*For of Alceste shulde thy wryting be, . . .

This passage repeats substantially the reproof of Love in ll. 266 ff., narrowing it down to Alcestis. It is therefore quite consistent with the purpose of the poem if that purpose be the glorification of wifely fidelity with Alcestis as its type. Any change of purpose which would make it possible to omit the first of these two passages, *i. e.*, ll. 266 ff., would also make it easy to change the second.

The lines which take the place of these in F, reflect a previous change in the ballad. They are :

F 539–543.

537–543 Than seyde Love, 'a ful gret negligence'
Was hit to thee, that ilke tyme thou made
"'Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses,' in balade,*
**That thou forgete hir in thy song to sette*
**Sin that thou art so gretly in hir dette,*
And wost so wel, that kalender is she
**To any woman that wol lover be.*

In F the poet sings his ballad in praise of a lovely lady whose identity he does not yet know. Among the beautiful and faithful women mentioned in it the name of Alcestis does not appear, since in the original form it occupied the place of honor in the refrain. This justifies the reproof; for whether Love interprets the refrain, "My lady cometh," as applying originally to Alcestis or not, the poet has failed to "set her in his song." Very naturally there follows immediately the injunction to make good his neglect by giving her the place of climax in the *Legend.*

III. Lines Peculiar to the F-Version.

Some of the lines which are peculiar to the F-version have been considered already in their relation to those lines of G to which, in a sense, they correspond, and which, according to my view, they have displaced in the process of revision. Many others, however, cannot be regarded as having taken the place of lines omitted from G. If F is a revised version, they are absolute additions designed to enrich the poem or to contribute to the better fulfilment of its purpose. If F is an original version and G a revision of it, these lines are deliberate omissions dropped out of the poem for some specific reason which it should be possible at least to conjecture.

That such a reason is to be found in their intrinsic value as poetic lines, no one has ventured to maintain, for it is these lines that justify the assertion that F is the less conventional, the more elaborate, and the more subjective poem. No more vigorous or effective passages occur in either *Prologue* than some of those that appear to be additions in F. Three reasons have been suggested as possible grounds for the omission of such lines. These are, first, that they allude too clearly to the Queen to suit Chaucer's mood at the time of revision,[1] second, that they are too lyrical in tone to be suitable in a Canterbury Tale,[2] and, third, that they were omitted in the course of revision in order to give G a more compact and coherent structure.[3]

The latter view, that of Lowes, assumes that certain parts of F lack unity and coherence because they have been composed "with the eye on a foreign original." Some attention was paid to this assumption in the preceding chapter, and the relation of the *Prologue* to two of the French poems has been discussed in connection with the plan of the poem. The other French originals may be considered now.

[1] ten Brink, *Englische Studien*, xvii, 19.
[2] Koeppel, *Literaturblat f. rom. u. ger. Philol.*, 1893 (February), col. 52.
[3] Lowes, p. 661.

Besides the *Lay de Franchise* and the *Paradys d'Amours*, which have been discussed, Lowes cites parallels from four different poems. These are Froissart's, *Dittié de la flour de la Margherite*, Machault's, *Dit de la Marguerite*, Froissart's, *Le joli mois de May*, and one of Deschamps' *balades*.

The last two mentioned may be dismissed from consideration by showing that they are parallel to G as well as to F.

G-Prologue, ll. 53–55.	*Le joli mois de May*, ll. 289–290.
This dayesye of alle floures flour, Fulfild of vertu and of alle honour,	Car elle est la flour souverainne De bonté et de beauté plainne.
	Balade No. 532, l. 16.
And ever y-lyke fair, and fresh of hewe.	Qui en tous temps belle et fresche sera.

In the case of another the parallel is so far from convincing that it is likewise to be dismissed from consideration.

Prologue F, ll. 50–52.	*Dit de la Margherite.*
That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe,	Car elle m'a gari d'oultre la mer.
	De ma doulour.
So glad am I whan that I have presence Of hit, to doon al maner reverence.	Si la doy bien servir et honnourer Et mettre en li cuer, et corps, et penser.

In the absence of any confirmatory evidence that Chaucer made use of the *Dit*, this citation, parallel to Chaucer in only what is commonplace, has no meaning whatever. The lover's *doulour* has been healed by the sight of his sweetheart from time immemorial.

Turning now to the *Dittié*, we find that the first parallel, which is undeniably close, is represented in both versions:

Prologue G, ll. 48–49.	*Dittié de la Marguerite*, ll. 162–166.
To seen these floures agein the sonne sprede, Whan hit up-riseth by the morwe shene.	. . . Car n'ai aultre desir Que de l'avoir pour veoir à loisir Au vespre clore et au matin ouvrir, Et la soleil de tout le jour sievir Et ses florons contre lui espanir.

What we have left consists of two brief citations from the *Dittié*, which are parallel to four lines peculiar to F. They are as follows:

F Prologue, ll. 56–59.	*Dittié de la Marguerite*, ll. 81–82.
And I love hit, and ever y-lyke newe, And ever shal, til that myn herte dye ;	Comme celle est que j'aim d'entente pure, Et aimerai tous jours, quoi que j'endure.
	ll. 159–162.
Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye, Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve.	S'en ce parti vivoie, nul millour Ne doit querir Homs, ce m'est vis, qui tant aime et desir La flour que fai.

Now if we had before us forty lines peculiar to F which could be traced to French sources, instead of four, or admitting 50–52, seven at most, there would still be lacking any proof that the version containing them was the earlier. I have followed out these parallels in such detail simply to make it clear that the "loosely-linked *cento*" of quotations in F reduces itself on examination to a somewhat insignificant matter after all.

That either in the structure of F, or in the relation of the *Prologue* to Froissart's *Dittié*, any satisfactory explanation of the omissions from F has been offered, I cannot believe. If there is any passage in the *Legend* that deserves the epithet loosely-linked it is G 48–60, with its abrupt transitions, its floating, parenthetic lines (50 and 53), and its sudden and unexplained shifts in point of view at lines 51 and 55. F, on the other hand, is logically coherent throughout and maintains a single point of view, that of the poet. Moreover, each of the passages is obviously an expansion of the idea preceding it. "I go early to *see* the daisy open," says the poet, "and (l. 50) that *sight* softens my sorrow, so glad am I to do it reverence." "I love it," he says again, "and (l. 57) ever shal, til my heart die." The fact that the second passage is related to the *Dittié*, proves, as I have intimated, nothing at all as to the order of the versions. We have no reason for believing that when Chaucer once used a poem as a source, he laid it aside forever. The very work of revising the *Prologue* would inevitably recall to his mind the works that suggested his first essay at a Marguerite poem, and would probably send him to them for improvements. If, as I believe, he revised with a changed purpose, the *Dittié*, which celebrates a living Margaret, would naturally occur to him.

We may next consider the lines in the light of the conjectures of Koeppel and ten Brink, quoting them again for the sake of clearness.

F 50–57.

*That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe,
*So glad am I whan that I have presence
*Of hit, to doon al maner reverence,
. . . . . .
And I love hit. . . .

*And ever shal til that myn herte dye;
*Al swer I nat, of this I wol nat lye,
*Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve.

This fervent avowal of love for the daisy, though the last couplet of it suggests an allegory, contains in itself no such clear reference to the Queen as would require its omission were such references deliberately omitted, nor is it more lyrical than many parts of the *Canterbury Tales*. In themselves the lines suggest no reason why they should be sacrificed. That they add life and genuineness to the rather tame, *so greet affecciouu*, of G is an obvious reason why they should have been added. When these lines are considered along with other clearer allegorical hints, we see that they foreshadow the celebration of the Queen under the type of the daisy, and we may readily conclude that they were added chiefly because the poet had a new purpose in mind as he wrote them.

F 68–72.

*But helpeth, ye that han conning and might,
*Ye lovers, that can make of sentement;
*In this cas oghte ye be diligent
*To forthren me somwhat in my labour,
*Whether ye ben with the leef or with the flour.

In G the allusion to the love-poets who have preceded Chaucer, speaks of them in the third person, and contains no such invocation as this.[1] In F the whole passage is enlivened by being

[1] The absence of these lines in G is accounted for by Lowes on the ground that by the time of the revision the *Marguerite* poems had become an old story to Chaucer. The reason is entirely inadequate for the effect. The appeal and the direct address are better poetry than the comparatively lifeless passage in G, and Chaucer had no motive that we can think of for such a change of feeling toward

thrown into the second person and enriched by the addition of these lines. The appeal to "lovers that can make of sentement" is based upon the special character of the poet's aim, an aim, which, it is to be noticed carefully, is quite different in the *two Prologues*. In G,

> . . . hit is seid in forthering and honour
> Of hem that either serven leef or flour.

This rather feeble and general dedication of the poet's work gives place in F to,

> . . . . ye see I do hit in the honour
> Of love, and eek in service of the flour,
> Whom that I serve . . . .

Remembering that when such a phrase as "service of the flour" occurs in the French *Marguerite* poems, it signifies devotion to a mistress of flesh and blood, and never to a mythological character like Alcestis, we may observe that Chaucer appeals to lover-poets on the ground of a double purpose—the glorification of love, and of a living person symbolized by the daisy. Who this person is the next passage gives us an intimation, which becomes perfectly clear only when the poem is dedicated to the Queen.

F 83–96.

> 81–96 Sin that ye see I do hit in the honour
> Of love, and eek in service of the flour,
> *Whom that I serve as I have wit or might.
> *She is the clernesse and the verray light,
> *That in this derke worlde me wynt and ledeth,
> *The herte in-with my sorowful brest you dredeth,
> *And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
> *The maistresse of my wit, and nothing I.
> *My word, my werk, is knit so in your bonde,
> *That, as an harpe obeyeth to the honde

the Flower and Leaf poets as would induce him to give up the better for the worse. Mere lapse of time is no ground for the omission of F 68–72 or for the change of second person to third. If we suppose that after the somewhat tame allusion in G, Chaucer's interest in the French poems was quickened by a re-reading of them, or by his correspondence with one of the poets, we can readily see how the revised poem would show a livelier feeling and would contain the direct appeal wanting in the first draft. Otherwise we must suppose Chaucer to have revised capriciously and unsuccessfully.

*And maketh hit sonne after his fingeringe,
*Right so mowe ye out of myn herte bringe
*Swich vois, right as yow list to laugh or pleyne,
*Be ye my gyde and lady sovereyne;
*As to myn erthly god, to yow I calle,
*Both in this werke and in my sorwes alle.

There can be no doubt that this allusion to the daisy, which drifts so easily into the second person and becomes an earnest invocation of a "gyde and lady sovereyne," is allegorical, and that, in view of lines 496–497, the daisy can only symbolize the Queen of England. No such allegorical interpretation of G is possible. If the daisy in the corresponding part of that version stands for any person, it can only symbolize the virtuous Alcestis. If this passage in F has been omitted in the course of a revision, therefore, it is fair to assume that the allusion to the Queen is responsible for its rejection. Nothing but the strongest kind of external evidence, however, would justify us in believing that Chaucer sacrificed these fine lines merely because he was out of suits with fortune. The conclusion that accords best with the other evidence, as well as with common sense, is that F here shows the effects of revision with a slightly changed purpose, that is, the invocation of the Queen as patroness of the poem.[1]

F 103–118:

*My busy gost, that thrusteth alwey newe
*To seen this flour so yong, so fresh of hewe,
*Constreyned me with so gledy desyr,
*That in my herte I fele yit the fyr,
*That made me to ryse er hit wer day—
And this was now the firste morwe of May—
*With dredful herte and glad devocioun,
*For to ben at the resurrecioun
*Of this flour, whan that it shulde unclose
*Agayn the sonne, that roos as rede as rose,
*That in the brest was of the beste that day,
*That Agenores doghter ladde away.
*And doun on knees anon-right I me sette,
*And, as I coude, this fresshe flour I grette;
*Kneling alwey, til hit unclosed was,
*Upon the smale softe swote gras.

[1] The relation of these lines to the *Filostrato*, pointed out by Lowes, seems to me rather to confirm this hypothesis than to weaken it, for both passages have the same purpose.

These lines are consistent with the allegory in that they represent a much greater devotion to the daisy than is displayed in G, yet they are necessarily so much more literal that a reviser bent on removing all references to the Queen would certainly have been tempted to spare them for their poetic value. Much more certainly would Chaucer, in revising G, have regarded such lines as these as an undoubted improvement.

F 143–144 :

*Upon the braunches ful of blosmes softe,
*In hir delyt, they turned hem ful ofte.

In the part of G that corresponds to this passage in F, the text is so corrupt that the couplet wanting in G may possibly have fallen out. It is quite as possible, however, that these two lines, giving as they do a thoroughly good descriptive touch, were added as an improvement.

F 152–187 :

*Construeth that as yow list, I do no cure.
*And tho that hadde doon unkindenesse—
*As doth the tydif, for new-fangelnesse—
*Besoghte mercy of hir trespassinge,
*And humblely songen hir repentinge,
*And sworen on the blosmes to be trewe,
*So that hir makes wolde upon hem rewe,
*And at the laste maden hir acord.
*Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord,
*Yet Pitee, through his stronge gentil might,
*Forgaf, and made Mercy passen Right
*Through innocence and ruled curtesye
*But I ne clepe nat innocence folye,
*Ne fals pitee, for 'vertu is the mene.'
*As Etik saith, in swich maner I mene.
*And thus thise foules, voide of al malyce,
*Acordeden to love, and laften vyce
*Of hate, and songen alle of oon acord,
*Welcome, somer, our governour and lord!'
*And Zephirus and Flora gentilly
*Yaf to the floures, softe and tenderly,
*Hir swote breth, and made hem for to sprede
*As god and goddesse of the floury mede;
*In which methoughte I mighte, day by day,
*Dwellen alwey, the Ioly month of May,
*Withouten sleep, withouten mete or drinke.

*A-doun ful softely I gan to sinke;
*And, leninge on myn elbow and my syde,
The longe day I shoop me for to abyde
*For nothing elles, and I shal nat lye,
But for to loke upon the dayeseye,
*That wel by reson men hit calle may
*The 'dayeseye' or elles the 'ye of day,'
*The emperice and flour of floures alle.
*I pray to god that faire mot she falle,
*And alle that loven floures, for hir sake!

This thoroughly Chaucerian passage gives us a much fuller description of the birds' May-festival, which is quite in the spirit of the poets whose help he has invoked, continues the note of romantic devotion to the daisy, and in the concluding verses once more makes clear its allegorical significance. The more elaborate description of the May-day scene is consistent with the other changes by which the date is definitely fixed as the first day of May, and the whole scene is transferred from dream to reality. It ought not to be necessary to insist that all these changes are improvements, and that no passage omitted from G contributed so much to the atmosphere of the poem and to its total effect as this episode of the bird-mating on May-day.

F 201.

**To goon to reste and erly for to ryse.*
To seen this flour to sprede, as I devyse.

This couplet consists of a line brought from a different context in G (l. 106) and a new line (F 201) which rimes with it. The lines could very easily be dropped out without destroying the sense (see G 95–96), yet the fact that the line which is common to both versions occurs earlier in G, and that the description of the May scene is consistently fuller and better in F justifies the belief that the other process has taken place, and that this natural touch was added to improve the passage. This couplet makes Chaucer's early morning walk into the meadows an habitual thing and not a special occurrence.

F 271–275.

270–275 This balade may ful wel y-songen be
*As I have seyd erst, by my lady free;

*For certeynly, alle these mow nat suffyse
*To apperen with my lady in no wyse.
*For as the sonne wol the fyr disteyne,
*So passeth al my lady sovereyne.

If F is to be regarded as the original version, we must account for the omission of these lines. They could not have been omitted as weak lines, nor even as tautological in that they repeat the sense of ll. 247–248, for the introduction of the new figure of speech saves them from bald repetition, and the words, "as I have seyd erst," show that the repetition was conscious and deliberate. They need not have been omitted because of a change from Ballad F to Ballad G, for they might easily have been recast to apply to Alcestis. We have left only ten Brink's unsatisfactory hypothesis that Chaucer revised in order to get rid of personal allusions. The truth is, I feel sure, that the lines were added to adapt the meaning of the ballad to the Queen, and that they are a direct consequence of the change of "Alceste is here" to "My lady cometh." The repetition in the devout line (277),

I prey to god that ever falle hir faire

which is almost identical with F 186,

I pray to god that faire mot she falle,

is probably unconscious, since line 277 is taken over from G with its context.

F 335.

332–335 And of Criseyede thou hast seyd as thee liste,
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste,
That ben as trewe as ever was any steel.
**Of thyn answere aryse thee right weel ;*

The long tirade of the God of Love in G, which Chaucer omitted, probably because it was least essential to the new purpose of the second version, is represented in F by a few significant lines of G and one entirely new line to complete the second couplet. The allusion to the fidelity of women is made general instead of specific, and the harshness of the reproof is greatly mitigated. In spite of the interest of the list of books for the Chaucer student, it is not unfair to say that the loss to the poem is not very great.

F 357.

353–358 And many a queyhte totelere accusour,
That tabouren in your eres many a soun,
Right after hir imaginacioun,
To have your daliance, and for envye ;
**These been the causes, and I shal not lye.*
Envye is lavender of the court alway ;

The corresponding passage in G reads :

332–334 And for to han with yow some daliaunce,
Envye (I prey to god yeve hir mischaunce !)
Is lavender in the grete court alway.

The one new line in F is made necessary by the change of the riming word in l. 356, and is much in the nature of a stop-gap. The general result, however, is advantageous, for the mention of envy in line 356 prepares the way for the fuller description of that vice which immediately follows, links the thought of the two sentences, and does away with the abruptness of the transition from G 332 to G 333.

F 380.

379–381. He moste think hit is his lege man,
**And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.*
This is the sentence of the philosophre.

Line 380 is inserted to supply the rime lost by the rejection of lines 360–364 of G, which, as has been already said, were probably omitted because of their too specific allusion to the duty of a king to his subjects.

F 496–497.

And whan this book is maad yive hit the quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene.

The absence of this couplet from G might possibly be ascribed to accident, if it were not that it agrees with numerous allegorical allusions to the Queen which are also wanting in G. These make it conclusive that the poem is dedicated to the Queen as an allegory in which she is the central figure. The fact that Alcestis, who speaks these lines, is herself in a sense a type of the Queen, does not invalidate this interpretation. This couplet is a touch of reality

suddenly interjected into the account of supernatural events, and is hardly conceived or spoken in character. Whatever incongruity is found in it, however, only serves to heighten the impression, already conveyed by the use of the ballad, that F is an adaptation of G to a purpose for which it was not at first intended. The abruptness of the introduction of the couplet in a part of the *Prologue* in which no other changes have been made is additional confirmation.

However this allusion to the Queen got into F, it is there and must be dealt with. To say that it shows that F was to be read at court, contributes nothing to the solution of the problem. To say that it merely shows that the poem was written at the command of the Queen, is to admit that the G-version, which lacks the allusion, was not so written, and the admission goes far toward confirming the theory that the allegory in F bears a special relation to the Queen. The couplet is, in fact, I feel sure, nothing less than a dedication of the F-version to the Queen of England, and in the light of other passages, an intimation, that the whole poem is to be regarded as an elaborate compliment to her.

F 552–577.

*But er I go, thus muche I wol thee telle
*Ne shal no trewe lover come in helle.
*Thise other ladies sittinge here arowe
*Ben in thy balade, if thou canst hem knowe,
*And in thy bokes alle thou shalt hem finde;
*Have hem now in thy Legend alle in minde,
*I mene of hem that been in thy knowinge.
*For heer ben twenty thousand mo sittinge
*Than thou knowest, that been good women alle
*And trewe of love, for aught that may befalle;
*Make the metres of hem as thee leste.
*I mot gon hoom, the sonne draweth weste,
*To Paradys, with al this companye;
*And serve alwey the fresshe dayesye
At Cleopatre I wol that thou beginne;
And so forth; and my love so shalt thou winne.
*For lat see now what man that lover be
*Wol doon so strong a peyne for love as she.
*I wot it wel that thou mayst nat al hit ryme,
*That swiche lovers diden in hir tyme;
*It were to long to reden and to here;

*Suffyceth me, thou make in this manere,
*That thou reherce of al hir lyf the grete,
*After thise olde auctors listen to trete.
*For who-so shal so many a storie telle,
*Sey shortly, or he shal to longe dwelle

In a part of this long passage peculiar (except 566 and 567) to F, ten Brink saw evidence of a conscious change of plan between the first version and the revision,—a change which made some of these lines no longer appropriate. In a preceding chapter I have endeavored to show that there is no necessity for assuming that Chaucer's plan as to the heroines whose legends he meant to write ever suffered any change that is evident to us. Even if it be granted that some modification of his original plan developed as he proceeded, it is hard to see why any of the lines in this passage should have been taken so literally as to seem inconsistent with the modified scheme. In fact any good reason for the omission of F 552–577 is hard to find. The fact that they make the *Prologue* fuller and more specific where it is somewhat bald and abrupt in G, and that in their allusion to the poet's books and to an example of fidelity in love, they in some degree take the place of G 267 ff., is good ground for believing them a later addition.

IV. Lines Partly Identical in Both Versions.

Many minor variations between the two *Prologues* affect only parts of lines. There remain to be considered, therefore, the lines which are partly identical in the two versions. In these we may expect to find valuable evidence; for whatever the purpose with which the poet undertook his revision, he can hardly have failed in the course of it to make numerous minor improvements, some of which we can hope to discern. Some lines, however, will be found equally good in both versions, and may be considered to differ merely because they were written at different times, and yet others may owe their differences to the vagaries of scribes.

In the classification of these variations, which I have regarded as changes made in the G-version, the over-lapping of divisions has been avoided so far as possible; but in some cases it has

seemed desirable to discuss a line under two different categories. Improvements in sense and meter often coincide. Changes made chiefly for the sake of consistency with other changes may involve incidental improvement in structure or rhythm. It is inevitable that some variations should be open to controversy, and to one familiar with the history of the problem of the two *Prologues* it will not be surprising if a few of the arguments should be made in other hands to work the other way. Mathematically exact proof is impossible. What the classification is expected to prove is that the general direction of the evidence is clearly in favor of F as the revised version, and that the conclusions of the preceding chapters are strikingly confirmed.

The nature of the classification[1] which I have undertaken may be indicated in general as follows:

I. Changes for Metrical Improvement.
   1. Changes which avoids harsh or unpleasant repetitions.
   2. Changes which obviate direct attack.
   3. Changes which result in more sonorous or more fluent lines.

II. Changes for Improvement in Grammatical Structure.

III. Changes for Improvement in Sense.

IV. Changes for Consistency.
   1. Changes which conform to the allegorical purpose of F.
   2. Changes which conform to other changes.

V. Incidental Variations.

I. CHANGES FOR METRICAL IMPROVEMENT.

1. *Changes which avoid harsh or unpleasant repetitions.*

G 1 A thousand *sythes* have I herd men telle,
F 1 A thousand *tymes* have I herd men telle.

The repetition of the *th*-sound is avoided in F by the change of *sythes* to *tymes*, and the alliteration of the line is improved. It

[1] A somewhat similar method is used by Bilderbeck (p. 78). It is perhaps fair to say that my own investigations were complete before his dissertation came to my hands, and that they remain practically unchanged.

may also be noted, as Skeat remarks,[1] that *tymes* is the later and more familiar term.

G 4 But natheles, *this* wot I wel also,
F 4 But natheles, *yit* wot I wel also.

Here again the change of a single word has obviated the repetition of the harsh *th*-sound. The difference in this case is perhaps slight, but the evidence that the poet's fine ear detected the echo of the sound and led him to seek variety is cumulative, as will be seen in the next line.

G 5 That ther nis noon *that dwelleth* in this contree,
F 5 That ther nis noon *dwelling* in this contree.

F is unmistakably a better line. In G there is an awkward heaping up of the *th*-sounds. The change of *that dwelleth* to *dwelling* removes two of them, and makes a much more fluent line. The monotonous succession of monosyllables is at the same time broken up, and a pleasing variation is gained by the use of the secondary accent in *dwelling* to bear the stress.

Legouis remarks[2] that G is encumbered and somewhat obscured by the three consecutive *thats* in lines 5 and 6. The fault, which though a slight one is not likely to have been committed in the course of a careful revision, is remedied by the change to *dwelling*.

. . . . on olde bokes leve
G 28 *Ther as ther is* non other assay by preve.
. . . . honouren and beleve.
F 28 These bokes, ther we han non other preve.

In G, *ther as ther is* makes an unpleasant jingle which is avoided in F by recasting the line without materially changing the sense.

G 32 And to hem yeve *swich* lust and *swich* credence,
F 31 And to hem yeve *I feyth* and *ful* credence.

The repetition of *swich* if not harsh is pointless, and the change which removes it improves the line metrically.

G 56 Fulfild *of* vertu and *of* alle honour,
F 54 Fulfilled of al vertu and honour.

[1] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, XXI.
[2] Legouis, p. 66.

The repetition of *of* in the same part of the foot gives the line a slightly disagreeable sameness of rhythm. The omission of the second *of* relieves this and gives a decidedly better line.

G 80 Of olde story, er swich *stryf* was begunne,[1]
F 196 of olde story, er swich *thing* was begonne.

G is a heaping up of sibilants, especially awkward in the succession *swich stryf*. This has been remedied by the change to *thing*, which makes a fluent line.

G 95 For derknesse *of* the night, *of* which she dredde,
F 199 For derknesse of the night, *the* which she dredde.

Here again the repetition of *of* is deliberately avoided in order to make a smoother and more pleasing line.

G 185 Byhind this god of love, upon *this* grene,
F 282 Behind this god of love, upon *the* grene,

The monotonous repetition of *this* has been obviated by changing the second *this* to the article. The result is a better line.

G 189 That, | sin that | God Adam made of erthe,
F 286 That, sin | that God Adam *had* made of erthe.

The direct attack on *that* followed by the ictus on the second *that* makes a very awkward repetition, which is especially obtrusive because both words bear the verse stress. The line is greatly improved by the insertion of *had* in F, which throws the repeated words into unaccented places and diminishes the effect of the repetition.

[1] Of the change of this and the preceding line to F 195-196, Lowes asks (p. 665), "Granted the careful discrimination involved in the *werk* and *stryf* of A [G] 79-80, what conceivable motive could there be for substituting, not for one only, but for both, the least discriminating word in the language—namely, *thing!*" Such a motive I have already suggested in the metrical improvement of F 196, improvement which might perhaps be insisted on in the case of F 195 also. Moreover, *thing* is in Chaucer's usage not always the very general term that it is in modern English, but is here evidently used in a sense akin to that in which it is employed in F 364,

But for he useth *thinges* for to make.

The contrast is between *this poem* and *that genre of poetry*, and *thing* is used in a sense almost technical. It is not at all true, therefore, that the word is "not apt," or that the more literal discrimination of G is necessarily an improvement.

G 188–190 And after hem com | *of wem|en* swich | a tras
That, sin that god Adam made of erthe,
The thredde part | *of wem|en ne* | the ferthe,
Ne wende I nat by possibilitee.

F 285–287 And after hem com of women swich a traas
That, sin that god Adam had mad of erthe
The thridde part *of man|kynd, or* | the ferthe.

In G 190 *of wemen* echoes the same phrase in the same metrical position in l. 188 and *ne* anticipates the first word of the following line. Such needless echoes a careful writer in our day seeks to avoid, and Chaucer was no less scrupulous. In this case he has altered both expressions, without materially changing the sense of the line, so as to destroy the repetition.

G 198 And *kneled adoun*, as it were for the nones,
F 295 And *kneled doun*, as it were for the nones.

In G a running together of *kneled adoun* into something like knel'da-doun with a harsh repetition of the *d*-sound is almost inevitable. In F *kneled* is dissyllabic and the repetition is removed making a decidedly better line.

G 209 Alceste is here, that al *that* may desteyne.
F 255 My lady cometh, that al *this* may disteyne.

The recurrence of *that* in G in the same position in the foot is obtrusive and unpleasing. Since the line is a thrice-used refrain the slightest defect is magnified in importance. This fact Chaucer has recognized in changing the second *that* to *this*. If we accept the theory that G is a revision of F we must explain why he has here made a worse line of a better.

G 213 *Eek* Cleopatre, with al thy passioun,
F 259 *And* Cleopatre, with al thy passioun,

Eek Cleopatre involves a harsh repetition of *k*-sounds, ek-kle, which is removed by the change of *eek* to *and*.

They setten hem . . . .
G 227 By ordre *alle* in compas, *alle* enveroun,
F 300 And with that word, a compas enviroun,
They setten hem . . . .

The repetition of *alle* in G serves no good purpose and mars the

line. It is avoided in F, the omission of it coinciding with improvements in sense.

G 228 First sat the god of love, and *than this* quene,
F 302 First sat the god of love, and *sith his* quene.

The recurrence of the *th*-sounds in *than this* is avoided by the change to *sith his* in F to the advantage of the line.

G 316 Thou shalt repente *hit, that hit* shal be sene!
F 339–340 If that thou live, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that hit shal wel be sene!

The repetition of *hit* in G is one reason for the awkwardness of the line. In F the thought is expanded into two fluent and effective lines.

G 343 And *takth* non heed of what matere he *take,*
F 365 Him *rekketh noght* of what matere he take.

Takth in G is echoed by *take* at the end of the line. The uneuphonious repetition is avoided by the change in F to *rekketh noght.*

G 437 *That, if that I* wol save my degree,
F 447 If, that I wolde save my degree.

That if that I is unpleasing on account of the recurrence of *that* in the same part of two consecutive feet. Moreover, lines 444 and 445 above are already overburdened with initial *thats.* Decided metrical improvement, as well as better sense, results from the change to *If that I wolde* in F.

G 485 Go now *thy* way, *thy* penance is but lyte.
F 495 Go now thy way, *this* penance is but lyte.

The change of the second *thy* of G to *this* is an improvement because it destroys the monotony of the repetition.

2. *Changes which obviate direct attack.*

G 189 That | sin that god Adam made of erthe,
F 286 That sin | that god Adam *had* mad of erthe,

G 192 Had|den ever in this world y-be,
F 289 Had ever in this *wyde* world y-be.

G 374 This | shal he doon, bothe to pore [and] riche,
F 388 Yit mot | he doon bothe right to pore and riche.

G 403 He | hath maked lewed folk delyte.
F 415 Yet hath | he maked lewed folk delyte.

Although direct attack, producing the so-called headless or clipped lines, was regarded by Chaucer as an admissible variation, and occurs in a few cases in both versions, such lines are exceptional. It is difficult to believe that the poet ever mutilated a complete and satisfactory line in order to produce direct attack. Four examples of incomplete lines in G which have been deliberately filled out in F, and the absence of any evidence of the converse process, contribute to the proof that F is a revised version.

3. *Changes which result in more sonorous or more fluent lines.*

G 27 Wel oghte us than on olde bokes leve,
F 27 Wel oghte us than *honouren and* beleve,
These bokes . . . .

G is full of short words and hard consonants. F is more sonorous besides being fuller in sense. Legouis remarks[1] of this line that F has "plus de ferveur d'accent, ... il est d'un rythme plus libre et plus sur."

G 34 That *from* my bokes *make* me to goon.
F 34 That *fro* my bokes *maketh* me to goon.

The change of *from my* to *fro my* is a gain in euphony, and the use of *maketh* instead of the subjunctive *make* gives a livelier sense and improves a somewhat meager line.

G 39 Farwel my *studie as lasting that sesoun!*
F 39 Farwel my *book and my devocioun!*

G 39 is an awkward line both in meter and in sense. *As lasting that sesoun* is a weak ending, apparently a tag introduced chiefly for the sake of the rime. No such suspicion can attach to the phrase which takes its place in F. *And my devocioun* improves the line metrically and, at the same time, provides in sense a suitable climax for the passage which it concludes.

G 68 *I hope that they wil* nat ben evel apayd.
F 80 *Forbereth me and beth* nat evel apayd.

[1] Legouis, p. 66.

The introduction of *forbereth*, which breaks up a succession of monosyllables, and of *me* and *beth*, which carry out a succession of e-sounds, makes a far better line metrically. The directness of F is also a great improvement in sense.

G 72 As of the leef, ageyn the flour, to make;
F 189 In preysing of the flour agayn the leef.

F is better massed, and is a smoother line. The string of monosyllables at the beginning of G is broken up in F.

G 75 For as to me *is leefer* noon ne lother,
F 191 For as to me *nis lever* noon ne lother,

In F the hiatus at the caesura is removed, and there is a gain in alliteration.

G 76 I *am with-holde* yit with never nother.
F 192 I *nam with-holden* yit with never nother.

As in the preceding lines, F is better by the introduction of the *n*, which separates the vowels and gives alliteration.

G 98 *Y-benched newe* with turves fresshe y-grave.
F 204 *That benched was* on turves fresshe y-grave.

The removal of one of the *y*-preterits improves the line, and *that benched was* makes better and closer sense. The sense of *newe* is sufficiently represented by *fresshe*.

G 103 I fel a-slepe within an houre or two.
F 209 I fel on-slepe in-with an houre or two.

On-slepe is more euphonious here than a-slepe.

G 133 *Without*|*e* re|penting mynherte swete,
F 147 *Without*|*en* re|penting myn herte swete,

F is a more sonorous line.

G 159 *Of* silk, *y*-brouded ful of grene greves;
F 227 *In* silke, *en*-brouded ful of grene greves.

In F there is a more harmonious succession of vowel sounds produced by the use of *in* and *en* and an alliteration of syllables ending in *n*. The result is a more sonorous line.

G 220 Ysiphile, betrayed with Jasoun,
F 266 Ysiphile, betraysed with Jasoun,

Betraysed is better than *betrayed* for this place, because it adds weight to a too-light line, relieving a heaping-up of vowel and half-vowel sounds.

G 323 And therto *rightful and eek* merciable.
F 347 And therto *gracious and* merciable.

F is a more fluent line, the result of the avoidance of the harsh consonants of *rightful* and *eek*.

G 331 For hate, or for Ielous imagining.
F 355 Right after hir imaginacioun.

F is more sonorous as well as more fluent.

G 390 [But] *axeth* mercy with a *sorweful* herte,
F 404 But *asketh* mercy with a *dredful* herte.

Dredful makes a smoother line.

G 399 And for|theréd | your lawe with his makíng.
F 413 And for|thred wél | your lawe in his making.

The use of the secondary accent on *forthered* to bear the stress is here harsh, especially as *making* is similarly stressed. F is consequently a smoother line.

II. CHANGES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE.

G 12–15 † Men shal nat wenen every-thing a lyë
For that he seigh it nat of yore ago.
God wot, a thing is never the lesse so
† Though every wight ne may hit nat y-see.

F 12–15 † Men shal nat wenen every-thing a lyë
But-if him-self hit seeth, or elles doth
For, god wot, thing is never the lasse sooth,
† Thogh every wight ne may hit nat y-see.

The introduction of *for* in F 14, compensated for by the omission of the article, binds the four lines together and makes clear the causal relation which is only implied in G. This change is prepared for by the change of *for that* in G 13 to *But-if*, a change which is itself an improvement in structure.

† Indicates lines common to both versions.

G 17–21 † Than mote we to bokes that we finde,
† Through which that olde thinges been in minde,
† And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
† Yeven credence, in every skilful wyse,
And trowen on these olde aproved stories.

F 19–22 † And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
† Yeve credence, in every skilful wyse,
That tellen of these olde appreved stories.

The structure of F is improved by shifting of line 22 from a parallel to *yeven credence* to an adjectival relation to *olde wyse*. Moreover, we have in G in line 20 somewhat of "giving credence" to old doctrines, in 21, of "believing in" old stories, and in 27, of "believing on" old books. This unnecessary tautology is relieved in F by changing the second "believe in" to "tell of."

G 40 Now have I thereto this condicioun
† That, of alle the floures . . . .

F 40 Now have I than swich a condicioun
† That, of alle the floures . . . .

The *swich* of F looks forward to its correlative *that* and makes a somewhat closer connection in thought than exists in G. Bilderbeck [1] notes also the elimination of the repetition of *th* in *therto this*.

G 89–94 *Whan* passed was almost the month of May,
And I had romed, al the someres day,
The grene medew, of which that I yow tolde,
Upon the fresshe daysy to beholde
And that the sonne out of the south gan weste,
And closed was the flour and goon to reste. . . . .

F 197–198 *Whan that* the sonne out of the south gan weste,
And that this flour gan close and goon to reste. . . . .

In G the connection between the *and that* of line 93 and its preceding time word *whan* of line 89 is very loose. In F line 197 begins a new paragraph and is immediately followed by *and that* making the structure firm and close.

G 107–108 *Fair was this medew, as thoughte me overal,
With floures swote enbrowded was it al.

F 118–119 *Upon the smale softe swote gras,
That was with floures swote enbrouded al.

[1] Bilderbeck, p. 80.

F applies the description to the grass rather than to the meadow and makes the construction hypotactic.

G 113–115 † Forgeten had the erthe his pore estat
† Of winter, that him naked made and mat,
And with his swerd of cold so *sore had* greved.

F 115 And with his swerd of cold so *sore* greved.

The change from the past perfect *had greved* of G to the past *greved* of F is a gain because it makes the line consistent in tense with the preceding *made*, to which it is parallel. In G the following line also contains a past perfect, and there is consequently an unpleasant heaping up of *had* tenses.

G 150–152 For al the world, right as the dayesye
† I-coroned is with whyte leves lyte,
Swich were the *floures* of hir coroun whyte.

F 220 *So* were the *florouns* of hir coroun whyte.

So is the more logical connective here, for *swich* inevitably has some adjectival meaning, whereas *so* is here purely adverbial.

G 245–248 † 'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing able,
* 'My servaunts been alle wyse and honourable,
Thou art my mortal fo, and me warreyest,

F 320–322 † 'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing able.
Hit is my relik, digne and delytable,
And thou my fo, and al my folk werreyest,

In G lines 246, 247, and 248 are all disconnected, and the transitions are abrupt. The substitution of F 321 for G 247 and the change in G 248 bind the three lines closely together by the force of a striking antithesis, besides giving the second and third a close grammatical relation. *My folk werreyest* in F is closer to the sense of the following common passage in which Chaucer is explicitly said to hinder love's followers.

G 337 Who-so that goth, alwey she moot [nat] wante.
F 361 Who-so that goth, algate she wol nat wante.

In F, *algate* = nevertheless, makes a firmer construction and consequently a less awkward line.

G 402–403 But wel I wot, with that he can endyte,
He hath maked lewed folk delyte. . . .

F 414–415 *Al be hit that* he can nat wel endyte
Yet hath he maked lewed folk delyte. . . .

In F the structure has been improved by the use of a correlative, with a consequent gain in directness and effectiveness of expression.

III. CHANGES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN SENSE.

G 10 But *goddes forbode*, but men shulde leve.
F 10 But *god forbede* but men shulde leve.

Here the expression *goddes forbode*, the sense of which is equivalent to that of the full form, *over goddes forbode*, has been given up for the clearer and more effective *god forbede*, *i. e.*, God forbid! At the same time the use of the verbal form has broken into a succession of *u* and *o*-sounds with just the vowel needed to improve the tone-color of the line.

G 13 For that he seigh it nat of yore ago;
F 13 But-if himself hit seeth or elles doth;

The sense is better in F. The introduction of the intensive, *himself*, is a gain, and the expression, *or elles doth*, instead of being superfluous as Köppel strangely asserts,[1] really adds a new and specific touch to the line. Legouis[2] regards G as "plus gauches," and Kunz[3] considers F "etwas ausgeführter und kräftiger gegeben."

G 36 Or elles in the Ioly tyme of May;
F 36 Save, certeynly, whan that the month of May.
Is comen. . . . .

F has greater definiteness, fixing the time as the first day of May. *Save certeynly* as Legouis points out[4] puts in relief the first mention of the May, the *leit motif* of the *Prologue*.

[1] Köppel, Col. 52.
[2] Legouis, p. 66.
[3] Kunz, "Verhaeltnis der Hss. von Chaucer's Legend of Good Women," p. 9.
[4] Legouis, p. 67.

G 51–52 And whan the sonne ginneth for to weste,
Than closeth hit, and draweth hit to reste,—

F 60–62 And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,
As sone as ever the sonne ginneth weste,
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,

What is in G a merely incidental description of the daisy's going to rest, is in F wrought into the structure of the poem, and is connected with the personality of the poet. *Ginneth weste* is an effective condensation of *ginneth for to weste*, which makes possible in the first part of the line the use of *as sone as ever* instead of the rather colorless *and whan*.

G 61 For wel I wot, that *folk* han her-beforn.
F 74 For wel I wot, that *ye* han her-biforn.

The introduction in a preceding passage in F of a direct appeal to lover poets for help in this poem makes the second person possible here. The gain in liveliness is obvious.

G 89 Whan passed was almost the month of May.
F 108 And this was now the firste morwe of May.

In G we have an abrupt and formal statement of the date, marking the beginning of the narrative part of the poem. In F the line besides being made more specific is subordinated to the account of the poet's early-morning devotion to the daisy, and becomes a mere parenthesis. The two passages have only to be read to make it clear that F is decidedly better.

G 92 Upon the fresshe *daysy* to *beholde*,
F 182 But for to *loke* upon the *dayesye*.

Daysy in G becomes *dayesye* in F in order to prepare for the etymology, *eye of day*, which is peculiar to F, and the line is recast in order to bring the word into a more emphatic position at the end of the verse.

G 104 Me mette how I *was* in the medew tho,
F 210 Me mette how I *lay* in the medew tho,

F is more specific.

G 126–130 †This was hir song—'the fouler we defye!'
Somme songen [layes] on the braunches clere
Of love and [May], that Ioye hit was to here,
In worship and in preysing of hir make,
And *of* the newe blisful someres sake.

F 138–144 † This was hir song—'the fouler we defye,
And al his craft!' And somme songen clere
Layes of love, that ioye hit was to here,
In worshipinge and preisinge of hir make.
And *for* the newe blisful somers sake
. . . . they turned hem . . .
† And songen . . .

G is corrupt and apparently incomplete, yet, as it was written, it was inferior to F, which shows decided improvements in sense. In F 139 *and al his craft* is a valuable addition. *Clere* belongs with *songen* and not with *braunches* as in G, where its adverbial relation is obscured, and the branches are mentioned later in F in a more appropriate sense. G 130 seems to be an illogical combination of the two expressions *of the somer* and *for the somer's sake*. This is remedied in F where the line looks forward to a new context.

G 145–146 And saw him come, and in his hond a quene,
Clothed in ryal abite al of grene.

F 213–214 The god of love, and in his hande a quene;
And she was clad in real habit grene.

F 214 specializes the queen at once and better prepares for the following description of her. *Al of*, the only insignificant words in G, are given up.

G 149 With *many floures*, and I shal nat lye;
F 217 With *florouns smale*, and I shal nat lye;

Florouns[1] *smale* is a more specific description than *many floures*.

G 150 For al the world right as *the* dayesye
I-coroned is . . . .
F 218 For al the world right as *a* dayesye
Y-corouned is . . . .

As the comparison here is purely literal, and the daisy has in F already some allegorical significance, the indefinite article is more appropriate.

[1] If, as seems likely, the word florouns is a borrowing from Froissart's *Dittié* (cf. Lowes, p. 631–4), it by no means follows that F is the original line. Chaucer knew French and might at any time adopt a French word that suited his purpose. But why should he give up the sonorous and descriptive *florouns smale* for *many floures?*

G 166–168 But *at the last* in hand I saw him holde
† Two fyry dartes, as the gledes rede;
And aungellich his winges *gan he* sprede.

F 234–236 And in his hande *methoughte I* saugh him holde
† Two fyry dartes, as the gledes rede;
And aungellyke his winges *saugh I* sprede.

The delayed perception of what the god of Love had in his hand comes in somewhat oddly after a detailed account of the embroidery of his gown and the garland on his head. This is improved in F. Another improvement is the change to *saugh I* in F 236, which continues the point of view of vision established by line G, 166.

G 221 *Mak* of your *trouthe in love* no bost ne soun,
F 267 *Maketh* of your *trouthe* neyther bost ne soun.

Maketh is an improvement in sense, for being plural it carries out the *alle y-fere* of F 263, whereas *mak* can apply gramatically only to Ysiphile. The occurrence of the phrase *trouthe in love* in G 214 above and the mention of love as the subject of the ballad in G 212 and 215 are perhaps sufficient justification of its omission here.

G 222 Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ne pleyne;
F 268 Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ye tweyne;

Ne pleyne seems inappropriate[1] here. The women are not represented as complaining of their fate but as glorying in their fidelity. Hence the propriety of replacing the expression even by the meaningless *ye tweyne*. The ending of the verse is little more than a tag in both cases.

G 226–227 † They setten hem . . . .
By ordre alle in compas, alle enveroun.
F 300 *And with that word* a-compas enviroun,
They setten hem. . . . .

And with that word is inserted primarily as a transition from the preceding passage peculiar to F. *By ordre alle* may be very well given up on other grounds, however, since the sitting in order is more fully explained later on.

[1] Cf. Bilderbeck, p. 79.

. . . . 'What dostow heer
G 242 *In my presence, and that* so boldely?'
. . . . 'What dostow heer
F 316 *So nigh myn owne flour,* so boldely.'

There is decided improvement in sense here in that interest at once centers in the flower instead of in the god of Love. It is to be noted that in general the god occupies a more prominent place in G than in F. Changes consistent with this difference in the versions have been made in G 244, 248, and 253.

G 313 By seint | Venus | of *whom that I was born.*
F 338 By se|ynt Venus *that my moder is.*

Of whom that I was born is a heavy round-about expression which has been well replaced by the more compact *that my moder is.*

G 320 Ageyns *these points*[1] that ye han to him meved.
F 344 Agayns *al this* that ye han to him meved.

Al this is less formal and, in the mouth of Alcestis, more appropriate than the *these points* of G.

G 330 That tabouren in your eres many a *thing.*
F 354 That tabouren in your eres many a *soun.*

Soun, besides being more specific than thing, carries out the figure in *tabouren.*

G 351–352 †As thogh that he of malice wolde endyten
Despyt of love, and hadde him-self *y-wroght.*

F 371–372 †As thogh that he of malice wolde endyten
Despyt of love, and hadde him-self *hit wroght.*

The sense of G is obscure and difficult, because an object for *hadde y-wroght* must be supplied. F is made clear by the insertion of *hit.*

G 387 To dampne a man withoute answere *or* word.
F 401 To dampne a man withoute answere *of* word.

Answere or word is illogical. The sense is improved in F by the change to *answere of word.*

[1] Was the choice of the word in G influenced by the *Lay de Franchise,* ll. 222–3,

Et quant li Roys ces doulz mos escouta
Touz *ces* .III. *poins* a dit qu'il retendra?

G 412 And for to speke of other *besinesse*,
F 424 And for to speke of other *holynesse*,

The reason for this change viewed from the standpoint of either version is not obvious. The more religious character of the works which are named after this line has been noticed, and Legouis suggests [1] that *holynesse* was used in order to be consistent with the mention of Boece, which could not be easily dropped out. It must be remembered, however, that the phrase *other holynesse* looks backward as well as forward, and the term *holynesse* applies equally to all the works named. It is more probable that we have here simply another change to the more specific and picturesque term. The poet is represented as on trial before an angry god, and his advocate is reciting his virtuous acts in his behalf. The works which she first names were written, she tells the god,

"To serve you, in preysing of your name,"

and in F the fiction of piety is kept up by calling the poems *holynesse* instead of keeping the colorless term *besiness*.

G 440 *And* al foryeve, with-outen lenger space ;
F 450 *I* al foryeve, with-outen lenger space ;

The offense of the poet has been committed against the god of Love, not against Alcestis, who intercedes in his behalf. His forgiveness, therefore, should come from the god of Love, and the change, slight as it is, was probably not accidental, but was made as an improvement in sense.[2]

G 471–472 †Thou shalt, whyl that thou livest, yeer by yeer,
The moste party of thy *lyve* spende. . . . .

F 481–482 †Thou shalt, whyl that thou livest, yeer by yeer,
The moste party of thy *tyme* spende. . . . .

The change from *lyve* to *tyme* is an improvement in sense. *Whyl*

[1] Legouis, p. 68.

[2] Lowes (p. 671, n. 4) regards this change as a "rude blow" to the theory that Alcestis is Queen Anne. This is pushing both the literal meaning and the allegory entirely too far. The avowed purpose of Alcestis was to reconcile her lord to the poet (cf. lines 419 ff.), and her responsibility for the reconciliation is fully recognized in both versions. Though the god may easily depute to Alcestis the assignment of penance, forgiveness belongs, in the nature of things, to himself alone.

that thou livest is sufficient intimation that the task is to be life-long. *Lyve* in the next line is needless repetition, which is obviated by the change to *tyme*, making better sense and more fluent verse.

. . . . Kalender is she
G 543–544 Of goodnesse, for she taughte of fyn lovinge,
†And namely of wyfhood the livinge.

F 544–545 For she taught al the craft of fyn lovinge.
†And namely of wyfhood the livinge.

The sense is somewhat clearer and simpler in F. G paraphrased means, 'for she taught the living of fine loving and especially of wifehood,' whereas in F the sense is, 'for she taught the craft (or art) of fyn loving and the living of wifehood.'

IV. CHANGES FOR CONSISTENCY.

1. *Changes which conform to the allegorical purpose of F.*

A general comparison of the two versions (Chapter III) has seemed to justify the conclusion that F is marked by an allegorical purpose which is wanting in G. This conclusion is borne out by various minor changes, which are to be satisfactorily accounted for only on the ground that they were made for the sake of consistency with that purpose. Such changes are the following:

G 48 To seen *these floures* agein the sonne sprede.
F 48 To seen *this flour* agein the sonne sprede.

The change to the singular is not only a gain in definiteness, but a first hint of the personification of the daisy in F.

G 53 So sone *hit is afered* of the night,
F 63 For fere of night so *hateth she* derknesse.

The tendency toward personification in F here becomes clear. It is a part of the enlivening which the whole passage has received from revision.

G 57–58 †And ever y-lyke fair and fresh of hewe,
As wel in winter as in somer newe,

F 55–56 †And ever y-lyke fair, and fresh of hewe,
And I love hit, and ever y-lyke newe,

The propriety of the mention of winter in G 58 has already been fully shown by Lowes.[1] It is given up here, not as has been surmised, because it is inconsistent with fact or literary convention, but because an avowal of constant love for the daisy is more important for the new purpose than a bit of description which is susceptible of literal interpretation only.

G 61 For wel I wot that *folk* han her-beforn
F 73 For wel I wot that *ye* han her-biforn

The direct appeal in F to "lovers that can make of sentement" for help "in this cas" enlivens the following lines by throwing them all into the second person. We may pass over the substitution of *ye* for *they* in G 65 and 67 and proceed to a comparison of the concluding lines of the passage.

G 68–80 I hope that they wil nat ben evel apayed
Sith hit is seid in forthering and honour
Of hem that either serven leef or flour.

F 80–2 For-bereth me, and beth nat evel apayed
Sin that ye see I do hit in the honour
Of love, and eek in service of the flour,
*Whom that I serve . . . . .

These lines indicate distinctly the difference in purpose between the two versions. One is simply a "flower and leaf" poem glorifying wifely fidelity with Alcestis as its crowning type; the other is written in the service of a flower, which is fervently invoked in terms of personification. The whole succession of changes contributes to the allegory.

G 158–62 †Y-clothed was this mighty god of love
Of silk, y-brouded ful of grene greves;
A garlond on his head of rose-leves
*Steked al with lilie floures newe.

F 227–30 In silk, enbrouded ful of grene greves
In-with a fret of rede rose-leves
*The fresshest sin the world was first bigonne
*His gilte heer was corouned with a sonne,

In F the rose-leves are transferred from the garland on the god's head to the embroidery of his robe. A crown of gold is

[1] Lowes, p. 617, n. 1.

now his due as a sign of royalty, but on account of his ethereal origin he wears a sun instead, "for hevinesse and wighte." That the change has been made to accommodate the description to an allegorical interpretation in which the god of Love becomes the king of England is possibly a fair inference. This is noted by Koch,[1] approved by Bilderbeck,[2] and rejected by Lowes.[3] Legouis[4] suggests, and not unreasonably, that the sun is more consistent with the following allusion to brightness. The objection of Lowes based upon the heat of the sun is meaningless, for it is "a sun" that is here mentioned and allusion is poetical.

G 179 *Hir name was Alceste*, the debonayre;

F 275–276 *So passeth al my lady sovereyne,
That is so good, so fair, so debonaire;

The suppression of the name of Alcestis in the ballad makes a change here necessary. It is to be noticed that the epithet *debonaire* is now applied, not to Alcestis but to *my ladye sovereyne*.

G 234 I, *lening* faste by under a bente.
F 308 I *kneling by this flour*, in good entente

In G the poet is merely the conventional spectator, who remains half-concealed to watch the company and "knowen what this peple mente," and who is surprised in the act.[5] In F he is a worshipper of the daisy, and is discovered kneeling devoutly beside the flower. This greater devotion is characteristic of F.

G 242 *In my presence*, and that so boldely.
F 316 *So nigh myn owne* flour, so boldely.

In F the flower stands for the Queen, into whose royal presence the poet has ventured. In G no such allegorical meaning attaches to it, and the god of Love rebukes the intruder for being in *his* presence.

G 355 That usen *wilfulhed* and tirannye.
F 375 That han no réward but at tirannye.

The sweeping expression of F, *that care for nothing but tyranny*,

[1] *Englische Studien*, xxx, 457.
[2] Bilderbeck, p. 86.
[3] Lowes, p. 675, n. 1.
[4] Legouis, p. 68.
[5] Cf. *Paradys d'Amours*, ll. 60–1, 228–36.

would be less likely to give offense to a royal patron than the more tempered expression, *that practise wilfulness and tyranny*, which might be construed to apply to a headstrong king of England. This is only a part of a general toning down noted by Skeat.[1]

2. *Changes which conform to other changes.*

G 51 *And whan* the sonne ginneth for to weste,
F 61 *As sone as ever* the sonne ginneth weste,

This change, an improvement in itself, is needed to conform to the introduction in F of several new lines the last of which, F 60, is

And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,

After this line the *and whan* of G must be given up. If the change had proceeded in the other direction and the lines peculiar to F had been dropped out, no alteration of F 61 would have been necessary or even desirable.

G 55 *This dayesye*, of alle floures flour,
. . . . . .
59 Fain wolde I preisen.

F 52–53 . . . to doon al maner reverence
As she, that is of alle floures flour,

The introduction in F of three lines, 50–52, of enthusiastic devotion to the daisy is responsible for the change in G 55, which is made to continue the sense and the spirit of the passage. The change is away from conventionality to vigor and liveliness of expression.[2]

G 71–72 *For trusteth wel, I ne have nat undertake*
As of the leef, ageyn the flour, to make;

F 186–189 *I pray to god that faire mot she falle,
*And alle that loven floures, for hir sake!
But natheles, ne wene nat that I make
In preysing of the flour agayn the leef.

[1] *Oxford Chaucer*, III, xxv; Bilderbeck, 95 ff.

[2] The "utter shipwreck of grammar" noted by Lowes (p. 660) is after all rather an innocent slip. For a similar anacoluthon cf. *Canterbury Tales*, A 4083,

Unthank come on his hand that bond him so
And he that bettre sholde han knit the reyne.

The almost complete change of G 71 to F 188 is due to the fact that the passage introduced in G by line 71 has been transposed to a new context in F, where it follows an impassioned invocation of the daisy. This makes the adversative sense of *but natheles* appropriate.

G 81–84 †But wherfor that I spak, to yeve credence
To bokes olde and doon hem reverence,
Is for men shulde autoritees beleve,
Ther as ther lyth non other assay by preve.

F 98–101 To olde stories, and doon hem reverence,
And that men mosten more thing beleve
Then men may seen at eye or elles preve?
*That shal I seyn, whan that I see my tyme,

The changes in G 83 and 84, which alter the whole trend of the passage making it interrogative, are made for the sake of consistency with the postponement which follows in F 101, and are part of a larger improvement already discussed.

G 108–110 With floures swote enbrowded was it al;
As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tree
†Comparisoun may noon y-maked be;

F 120–122 *Of *swich* swetnesse and swich odour overal,
That, for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or tree,
†Comparisoun may noon y-maked be;

The change of G 109, *as for to speke* to *that, for to speke* is made possible by the use of *swich* in the preceding line peculiar to F. The result is a clearer and firmer construction.

G 144–145 *Tho gan I loken endelong the mede,*
And saw him come, and in his hond a quene,

F 212–213 *And from a-fer com walking in the mede*
The god of love, and in his hande a quene;

These lines in G immediately follow the exclamation of the lark, which is omitted in F. The omission of this awkward device leads to the use of the more direct lines in F and the immediate appearance of the real subject, the Queen.

G 224 Whan that this balade al y-songen was.
F 270 This balade may ful wel y-songen be,

The changed purpose of the ballad and the introduction of five

new lines of praise for "my lady free," have necessitated a complete change in G 224.

G 238 And seyde, 'who *resteth* ther?' and I answerede
F 312 And seyde, 'who *kneleth* ther?' and I answerede

This change is made for the sake of consistency with F 308.

G 266–268 *Hast thou nat mad in English eek the book
How that Crisseyde Troilus forsook,
In shewinge how that wemen han don mis?

F 332–333 And of Criseyde thou hast seyd as thee liste
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste,

The omission of the "old age passage," G 258–264, has deprived lines G 266–268 of their context and made it necessary to recast these lines in F.

G 288 For to hir love were they so trewe,
F 334 That ben as trewe as ever was any steel.

These lines are not exactly parallel. The variation is due to the omission of lines G 267–312. The substance of those lines, which recount instances of fidelity, is tersely expressed in the single line of F.

G 315 As other *olde foles* many a day,
F 337 As other *wi ecches han doon* many a day,

The omission of the allusion to *olde foles* in G 262 may be responsible for the change of G 315. Both changes were probably due to a desire to tone down the somewhat blunt character of this part of the *Prologue*.

G 370 *And for to* kepe his lordes hir degree,
F 384 *Al wol he* kepe his lordes hir degree,

G 370 follows a couplet which alludes to a king's oath of office, and which is wanting in F. The omission of it makes necessary a change in F 384, which becomes the first line of a new sentence.

G 532–533 *For of Alceste shulde thy wryting be
Sin that thou wost that kalender is she
. . . . .

F 541–540 *Sin that thou art so gretly in her dette
And wost so wel, that kalender is she

G 533 has been changed to adapt it to the new context which it has in F.

V. CHANGES INCIDENTAL TO THE REVISION AND NOT SIGNIFICANT AS TO ITS DIRECTION.

A number of minor variations between the two versions have found no place in the classification thus far, many, because they are so slight as to seem almost accidental, and others, because no argument as to the priority of either form can safely be based upon them. For the sake of completeness these changes are here set down in the order of their occurrence in the G *Prologue*.

G 29 And as for me, though that *my wit be* lyte.
F 29 And as for me, thogh that *I can but* lyte.

G 77 *I not* who serveth leef, ne who the flour.
F 193 *Ne I not* who serveth leef, ne who the flour.

G 78 *That nis nothing the entente of my* labour.
F 194 *Wel brouken they hir service or* labour.

G 131 *That* songen, 'blissed be seynt Valentyn!'
F 145 *And* songen, 'blessed be seynt Valentyn!'

G 132 [For] *at* his day I chees yow to be myn,
F 146 For *on* his day I chees yow to be myn,

G 135–136 And after diden other observaunces,
Right [plesing] un-to love and to nature;
F 150–151 To love, and diden hir other observaunces,
That longeth un-to love and to nature;

G 153 For of o perle *fyn and* oriental
F 221 For of o perle *fyne*, oriental

G 157 Considered eek *the* fret of gold above.
F 225 Considered eek *hir* fret of gold above.

G 170 Al-gate me thoughe *he mighte wel* y-see;
F 238 Al-gate me thoughte *that he mighte* see

G 180 I prey to god that ever falle *she* fayre!
F 277 I prey to god that ever falle *hir* faire!

G 214 Hyde ye your trouthe *in* love and your renoun;
F 260 Hyde ye your trouthe *of* love and your renoun;

G 215 And thou, Tisbe, that hast *for* love swich peyne.
F 261 And thou, Tisbe, that hast *of* love swich peyne.

G 217 Herro, Dido, Landomia, alle *in-fere*,
F 263 Herro, Dido, Landomia, alle *y-fere*,

G 218 *Eek* Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,
F 264 *And* Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,

G 231 As they were of *degree*, ful curteisly;
F 305 As they were of *estaat*, ful curteisly;

G 237 *The* god of love on me his *eye* caste,
F 311 *This* god of love on me his *eyen* caste,

G 239 Un-to his *axing*, whan that I *him* herde,
F 313 Unto his *asking*, what that I *hit* herde,

G 251 And lettest folk *to han* devocioun
F 325 And lettest folk *from hir* devocioun

G 253 *To troste on me.* Thou mayst hit nat denye;
F 327 *To serve Love.* Thou mayst hit nat denye;

G 254 For in pleyn text, hit nedeth nat to glose,
F 328 For in pleyn text, withouten nede of glose,

G 314 *Although* [*that*] thou reneyed hast my lay,
F 336 For, *thogh that* thou reneyed hast my lay,

G 338 This man to yow may *wrongly* been accused,
F 350 This man to yow may *falsly* been accused,

G 340 *Or elles, sir*, for that this man is nyce
F 362 *And eek, paraunter*, for this man is nyce

G 341 He may translate a thing in no malyce,
F 363 He mighte doon hit, gessing no malyce,

G 342 But for he useth *bokes* for to make,
F 364 But for he useth *thinges* for to make

G 375 Al be that *here stat* be nat a-liche,
F 389 Al be that *hir estat* be nat y-liche,

G 439 Al lyth in yow, doth with him *what* yow leste
F 449 Al lyth in yow, doth with him *as* yow leste

G 451 That han me holpen, and put in *swich* degree,
F 461 That han me holpe and put in *this* degree,

G 467 In right ne wrong; and lerne *this at* me!
F 477 In right ne wrong; and lerne *that of* me!

G 479 For in your world that is now *holden* game.
F 489 For in your world that is now *holde a* game.

G 480 And thogh thee *lesteth* nat a lover be.
F 490 And thogh thee *lyke* nat a lover be.

V. Conclusion.

If my inferences from the evidence presented in the preceding chapters have been just, the cumulation of proof makes certain conclusions appear inevitable. In the first place, it is clear that the version which I have called G, the text of Ms. Gg. 4, 27, is an earlier draft of the *Prologue*, and that F, the commonly accepted text, is the later. This has been proved, not, perhaps, for all time nor beyond all question, but with as high a degree of certainty as can reasonably be expected in the solution of such a problem. The first impressions of Furnivall, Kunz, Skeat, and others have been fully confirmed. The arguments of ten Brink and Lowes, which make against the traditional opinion, have been examined in detail, and have been found to be not only inadequate in themselves but also overwhelmingly contradicted by evidence on the other side.

It has been shown, in the second place, that the later version is an adaptation of the earlier to meet the demands of a new purpose. This purpose is the celebration, under the figure of the daisy, and through the daisy, of Alcestis, of the virtues of the queen of England, to whom the later version is dedicated. The assumption that such a purpose existed is not only justified by the language of the F-version, but is demanded by many of the changes, which are inexplicable without it.

These two conclusions, constituting in themselves the end which was to be attained by this investigation, are not inter-dependent. If the allegorical interpretation of F should be denied, or extended to G also, the evidence in favor of F as a revision would remain intact. Data for determining the time or the occasion of the revision are not available, and the question of date is, moreover, not pertinent to this discussion. There is, however, no evidence to indicate that the two versions are separated by any considerable lapse of time.

This study of the relation of the two *Prologues* to each other was suggested by a general discussion of the problem in the English Seminary of the Johns Hopkins University. My thanks are due to Mr. Jas. E. Routh, Mr. B. A. Wise, and other members of the seminary for helpful notes and suggestions placed at my disposal at the outset.

LIFE.

I was born in Warren County, Illinois, in the year 1875; attended the public schools of that county and of Baltimore; and received the degree of A. B. from the Johns Hopkins University in 1899. The next year I spent at Harvard as a graduate student in English. In 1900 I returned to Johns Hopkins, entered the English seminary, was appointed Student Assistant in English, and reappointed in 1901 and 1902. I held a Hopkins Scholarship during my undergraduate course and was Fellow in English in 1903–1904.

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